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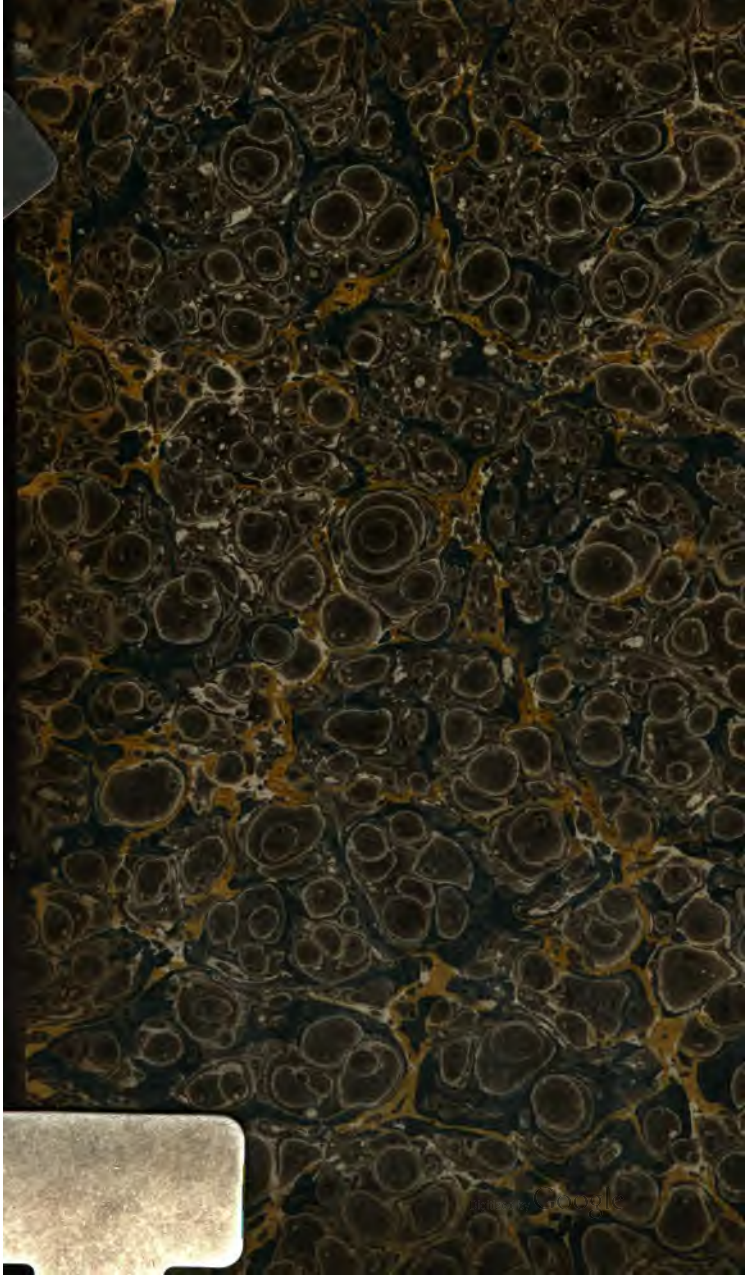

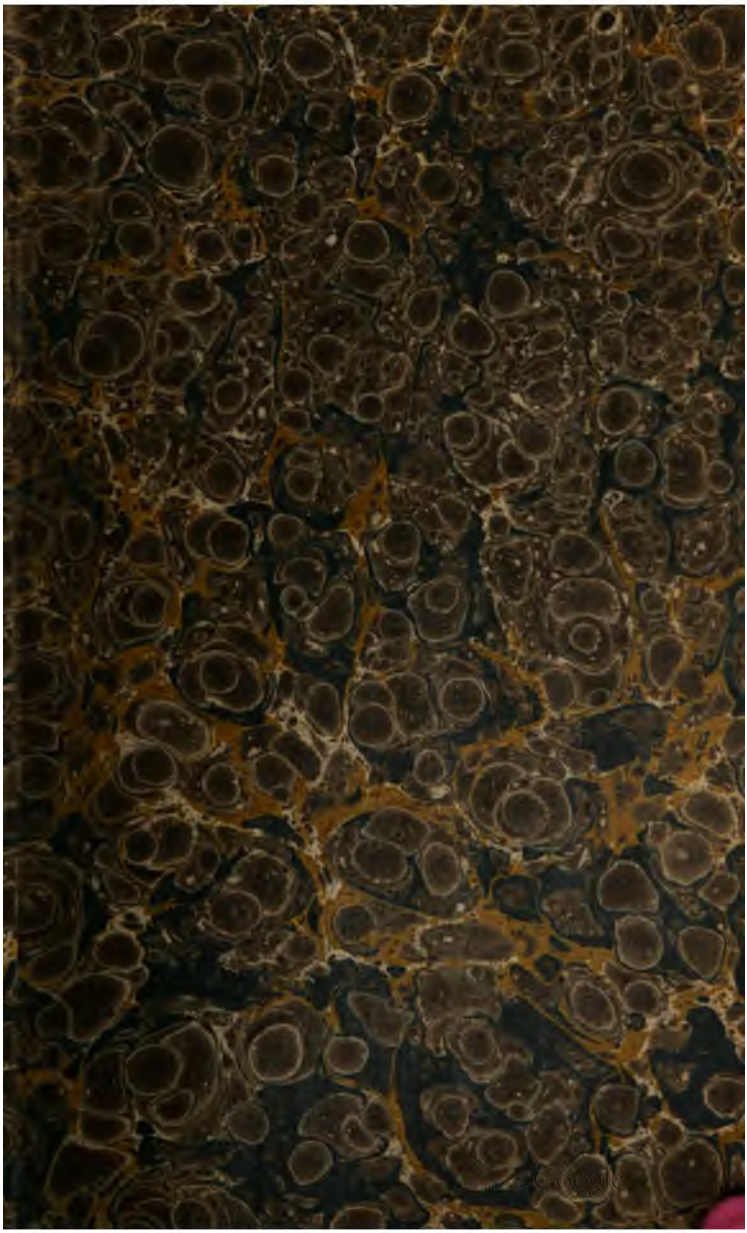

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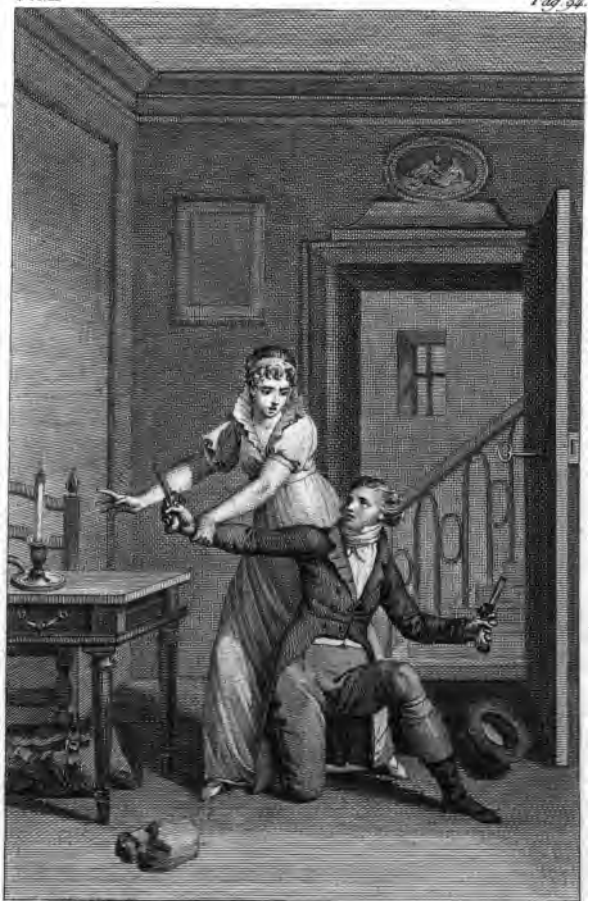

Le Barbier Jan.ᵉ Del. L'Epine. Sculp.

"Oh, Sir! have mercy on Yourself!"

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EVELINA:

OR

THE HISTORY

OF

A YOUNG LADY'S ENTRANCE INTO THE WORLD.

A NEW EDITION IN THREE VOLUMES WITH PLATES.

VOL. II.

PARIS.

PRINTED FOR THEOPHILUS BARROIS, JUNIOR,
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BODLEIAN
27 MAR 1969

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EVELINA.

LETTER I.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove, May 10.

OUR house has been enlivened to-day by the arrival of a London visitor; and the necessity I have been under, of concealing the uneasiness of my mind, has made me exert myself so effectually, that I even think it is really diminished; or, at least, my thoughts are not so totally, so very anxiously occupied by one only subject, as they lately were.

I was strolling this morning, with Miss Mirvan, down a lane about a mile from the grove, when we heard the trampling of horses; and, fearing the narrowness of the passage, we were turning hastily back, but stopped upon hearing a voice call out, "Pray, Ladies! don't be frightened, for I will walk my horse." We turned again, and then saw Sir Clement Willoughby. He dismounted, and, approaching us

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with the reins in his hand, presently recollected us. "Good heaven!" cried he, with his usual quickness, "do I see Miss Anville?—and you, too, Miss Mirvan?"

He immediately ordered his servant to take charge of his horse, and then, advancing to us, took a hand of each, which he pressed to his lips, and said a thousand fine things concerning his good fortune, our improved looks, and the charms of the country, when inhabited by *such* rural deities. "The town, Ladies, has languished since your absence,—or, at least, I have so much languished myself, as to be absolutely insensible to all it had to offer. One refreshing breeze, such as I now enjoy, awakens me to new vigor, life, and spirit: but I never before had the good luck to see the country in such perfection."

"Has not almost every body left town, Sir?" said Miss Mirvan.

"I am ashamed to answer you, Madam!—but indeed it is as full as ever, and will continue so till after the birth-day. However, you, Ladies were so little seen, that there are but few who know what it has lost: for my own part, I felt it too sensibly, to be able to endure the place any longer."

"Is there any body remaining there, that we were acquainted with?" cried I.

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"O yes, Ma'am." And then he named two or three persons we had seen when with him; but he did not mention Lord Orville, and I would not ask him, lest he should think me curious: perhaps, if he stays here some time, he may speak of him by accident.

He was proceeding in this complimentary style, when we were met by the Captain; who no sooner perceived Sir Clement, than he hastened up to him, gave him a hearty shake of the hand, a cordial slap on the back, and some other equally gentle tokens of satisfaction; assuring him of his great joy at his visit, and declaring he was as glad to see him as if he had been a messenger who brought news that a French ship was sunk. Sir Clement, on the other side, expressed himself with equal warmth, and protested he had been so eager to pay his respects to Captain Mirvan, that he had left London in its full lustre, and a thousand engagements unanswered, merely to give himself that pleasure.

"We shall have rare sport," said the Captain, "for, do you know the old Frenchwoman is among us?" Fore George! I have scarce made any use of her yet, by reason I have had nobody with me that could enjoy a joke: however, it shall go hard but we'll have some diversion now."

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Sir Clement very much approved of the proposal; and we then went into the house, where he had a very grave reception from Mrs. Mirvan, who is by no means pleased with his visit, and a look of much discontent from Madame Duval; who said to me, in a low voice, "I'd as soon have seen Old Nick as that man; for he's the most impertinentest person in the world, and isn't never of my side."

The Captain is now actually occupied in contriving some scheme which, he says, is *to play the old dowager off;* and so eager and delighted is he at the idea, that he can scarcely constrain his raptures sufficiently to conceal his design, even from herself: I wish, however, since I do not dare put Madame Duval upon her guard, that he had the delicacy not to acquaint me with his intention.

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LETTER II.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

May 13th.

THE Captain's operations are begun,—and, I hope, ended; for indeed poor Madame Duval has already but too much reason to regret Sir Clement's visit to Howard Grove.

Yesterday morning, during breakfast, as the Captain was reading the newspaper, Sir Clement suddenly begged to look at it, saying he wanted to know if there was any account of a transaction, at which he had been present the evening before his journey hither, concerning a poor Frenchman, who had got into a scrape which might cost him his life.

The Captain demanded particulars; and then Sir Clement told a long story of being with a party of country friends at the Tower, and hearing a man cry out for mercy in French; and that, when he inquired into the occasion of his distress, he was informed that he had been taken up upon suspicion of treasonable practices against the government. "The poor

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fellow," continued he, "no sooner found that I spoke French, than he besought me to hear him; protesting that he had no evil designs, that he had been but a short time in England, and only waited the return of a Lady from the country to quit it for ever."

Madame Duval changed color, and listened with the utmost attention.

"Now, though I by no means approve of so many foreigners continually flocking into our country," added he, addressing himself to the Captain, "yet I could not help pitying the poor wretch, because he did not know enough of English to make his defence: however, I found it impossible to assist him, for the mob would not suffer me to interfere: in truth, I am afraid he was but roughly handled."

"Why, did they duck him?" said the Captain.

"Something of that sort," answered he.

"So much the better! so much the better!" cried the Captain, "an impudent French puppy! —I'll bet you what you will he was a rascal. I only wish all his countrymen were served the same."

"I wish you had been in his place, with all my soul!" cried Madame Duval, warmly;—"but pray, Sir! didn't nobody know who this poor gentleman was?"

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"Why, I did hear his name spoken," answered Sir Clement, "but I cannot recollect it."

"It wasn't,—it wasn't—Du Bois?" stammered out Madame Duval.

"The very name!" answered he, "yes, Du Bois! I remember it now."

Madame Duval's cup fell from her hand, as she repeated "Du Bois! Monsieur Du Bois, did you say?"

"Du Bois! why, that's *my* friend," cried the Captain, "that's *Monsieur Slippery*, i'n't it?—Why, he's plaguy fond of sousing work; however, I'll be sworn they gave him his fill of it."

"And I'll be sworn," cried Madame Duval, "that you're a—but I don't believe nothing about it; so you needn't be so overjoyed; for I dare say it was no more Monsieur Du Bois than I am."

"I thought at the time," said Sir Clement, very gravely, "that I had seen the gentleman before; and now I recollect, I think it was in company with you, Madam."

"With *me*, Sir?" cried Madame Duval.

"Say you so?" said the Captain, "why, then, it must be he, as sure as you're alive!—Well! but, my good friend, what will they do with poor Monsieur?"

"It is difficult to say," answered Sir Clement,

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very thoughtfully; "but I should suppose, that if he has not good friends to appear for him, he will be in a very unpleasant situation; for these are serious sort of affairs."

"Why, do you think they'll hang him?" demanded the Captain.

Sir Clement shook his head, but made no answer. Madame Duval could no longer contain her agitation; she started from her chair, repeating, with a voice half choked, "Hang him!—they can't—they shan't—let them at their peril!—however, it's all false, and I won't believe a word of it;—but I'll go to town this very moment, and see M. Du Bois myself;—I won't wait for nothing."

Mrs. Mirvan begged her not to be alarmed; but she flew out of the room, and up stairs into her own apartment. Lady Howard blamed both the gentlemen for having been so abrupt, and followed her. I would have accompanied her, but the Captain stopped me; and, having first laughed very heartily, said he was going to read his commission to his ship's company.

"Now, do you see," said he, "as to Lady Howard, I sha'n't pretend for to enlist her into my service, and so I shall e'en leave her to make it out as well as she can; but as to all you, I expect obedience and submission to orders: I am now upon a hazardous expedition, having

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undertaken to convoy a crazy vessel to the shore of Mortification; so, d'ye see, if any of you have any thing to propose that will forward the enterprise,—why, speak and welcome; but if any of you, that are of my chosen crew, capitulate, or enter into any treaty with the enemy,—I shall look upon you as mutinying, and turn you adrift."

Having finished this harangue, which was interlarded with many expressions and sea-phrases that I cannot recollect, he gave Sir Clement a wink of intelligence, and left us to ourselves.

Indeed, notwithstanding the attempts I so frequently make of writing some of the Captain's conversation, I can only give you a faint idea of his language; for almost every other word he utters is accompanied by an oath, which, I am sure, would be as unpleasant for you to read as for me to write; and, besides, he makes use of a thousand seaterms, which are to me quite unintelligible.

Poor Madame Duval sent to inquire at all probable places, whether she could be conveyed to town in any stagecoach; but the Captain's servant brought her for answer, that no London stage would pass near Howard Grove till to-day. She then sent to order a chaise; but was soon assured that no horses could be procured. She was so much inflamed by these disappointments, that she threatened to set out for town on foot,

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and it was with difficulty that Lady Howard dissuaded her from this mad scheme.

The whole morning was filled up with these inquiries: but, when we were all assembled to dinner, she endeavoured to appear perfectly unconcerned, and repeatedly protested that she gave not any credit to the report, as far as it regarded M. Du Bois, being very certain that he was not the person in question.

The Captain used the most provoking efforts to convince her that she deceived herself; while Sir Clement, with more art, though not less malice, affected to be of her opinion: but, at the same time that he pretended to relieve her uneasiness, by saying that he doubted not having mistaken the name, he took care to enlarge upon the danger to which the *unknown gentleman* was exposed, and expressed great concern at his perilous situation.

Dinner was hardly removed, when a letter was delivered to Madame Duval. The moment she had read it, she hastily demanded from whom it came? "A country boy brought it," answered the servant, "but he would not wait."

"Run after him this instant!" cried she, "and be sure you bring him back. *Mon Dieu! quelle avanture! que ferai-je?*"

"What's the matter? what's the matter?" said the Captain.

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"Why nothing,—nothing's the matter. *Oh, mon Dieu!*"

And she rose, and walked about the room.

"Why, what—has Monsieur sent to you?" continued the Captain: "is that there letter from him?"

"No,—it i'n't;—besides, if it is, it's nothing to you."

"Oh, then, I'm sure it is! Pray now, Madame, don't be so close; come, tell us all about it;—what does he say? how did he relish the horse-pond?—which did he find best, sousing *single* or *double*?—'Fore George! 'twas plaguy unlucky you was not with him!"

"It's no such a thing, Sir!" cried she, very angrily, "and if you're so very fond of a horse-pond, I wish you'd put yourself into one, and not be always a thinking about other people's being served so."

The man then came in to acquaint her they could not overtake the boy. She scolded violently, and was in such perturbation, that Lady Howard interfered, and begged to know the cause of her uneasiness, and whether she could assist her?

Madame Duval cast her eyes upon the Captain and Sir Clement, and said she should be glad to speak to her Ladyship, without so many witnesses.

"Well, then, Miss Anville!" said the Captain,

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turning to me, "do you and Molly go into another room, and stay there till Mrs. Duval has opened her mind to us."

"So you may think, Sir!" cried she, "but who's fool then? no, no! you needn't trouble yourself to make a ninny of me, neither; for I'm not so easily taken in, I'll assure you."

Lady Howard then invited her into the dressing-room, and I was desired to attend her.

As soon as we had shut the door, "O my Lady!" exclaimed Madame Duval, "here's the most cruellest thing in the world has happened! —But that Captain is such a beast, I can't say nothing before him,—but it's all true! poor M. Du Bois is tooked up!"

Lady Howard begged her to be comforted; saying that, as M. Du Bois was certainly innocent, there could be no doubt of his ability to clear himself.

"To be sure, my Lady!" answered she, "I know he is innocent; and, to be sure, they'll never be so wicked as to hang him for nothing?"

"Certainly not!" replied Lady Howard; "you have no reason to be uneasy. This is not a country where punishment is inflicted without proof."

"Very true, my Lady! but the worst thing is this; I cannot bear that that fellow, the Captain, should know about it; for if he does, I

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sha'n't never hear the last of it;—no more won't poor M. Du Bois."

"Well, well!" said Lady Howard, "show me the letter, and I will endeavour to advise you."

The letter was then produced. It was signed by the clerk of a country justice; who acquainted her, that a prisoner, then upon trial for suspicion of treasonable practices against the government, was just upon the point of being committed to jail; but having declared that he was known to her, this clerk had been prevailed upon to write, in order to inquire if she really could speak to the character and family of a Frenchman, who called himself Pierre Du Bois.

When I heard the letter, I was quite amazed at its success. So improbable did it seem, that a foreigner should be taken before a *country* justice of peace, for a crime of so dangerous a nature, that I cannot imagine how Madame Duval could be alarmed, even for a moment. But, with all her violence of temper, I see that she is easily frightened, and, in fact, more cowardly than many who have not half her spirit; and so little does she reflect upon circumstances or probability, that she is continually the dupe of her own—I ought not to say *ignorance*, but yet I can think of no other word.

I believe that Lady Howard, from the beginning of the transaction, suspected some con-

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trivance of the Captain; and this letter, I am sure, must confirm her suspicion: however, though she is not at all pleased with his frolic, yet she would not hazard the consequence of discovering his designs: her looks, her manner, and her character, made me draw this conclusion from her apparent perplexity; for not a word did she say, that implied any doubt of the authenticity of the letter. Indeed there seems to be a sort of tacit agreement between her and the Captain, that she should not appear to be acquainted with his schemes; by which means she at once avoids quarrels and supports her dignity.

While she was considering what to propose, Madame Duval begged to have the use of her Ladyship's chariot, that she might go immediately to the assistance of her friend. Lady Howard politely assured her that it should be extremely at her service; and then Madame Duval besought her not to own to the Captain what had happened; protesting that she could not endure he should know poor M. Du Bois had met with so unfortunate an accident. Lady Howard could not help smiling, though she readily promised not to *inform* the Captain of the affair. As to me, she desired my attendance; which I was by no means rejoiced at, as I was certain she was going upon a fruitless errand.

I was then commissioned to order the chariot.

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At the foot of the stairs I met the Captain, who was most impatiently waiting the result of the conference. In an instant we were joined by Sir Clement. A thousand inquiries were then made, concerning Madame Duval's opinion of the letter, and her intentions upon it: and when I would have left them, Sir Clement, pretending equal eagerness with the Captain, caught my hand, and repeatedly detained me to ask some frivolous question, to the answer of which he must be totally indifferent: at length, however, I broke from them; they retired into the parlor, and I executed my commission.

The carriage was soon ready, and Madame Duval, having begged Lady Howard to say she was not well, stole softly down stairs, desiring me to follow her. The chariot was ordered at the garden-door; and when we were seated, she told the man, according to the clerk's directions, to drive to Mr. Justice Tyrell's; asking, at the same time, how many miles off he lived?

I expected he would have answered that he knew of no such person; but, to my great surprise, he said, "Why, Squire Tyrell lives about nine miles beyond the park."

"Drive fast, then," cried she, "and you sha'n't be no worse for it."

During our ride, which was extremely tedious, she tormented herself with a thousand fears for

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M. Du Bois's safety; and piqued herself very much upon having escaped unseen by the Captain; not only that she avoided his triumph, but because she knew him to be so much M. Du Bois's enemy, that she was sure he would prejudise the Justice against him, and endeavour to take away his life. For my part, I was quite ashamed of being engaged in so ridiculous an affair, and could only think of the absurd appearance we should make upon our arrival at Mr. Tyrell's.

When we had been out near two hours, and expected every moment to stop at the place of our destination, I observed that Lady Howard's servant, who attended us on horseback, rode on forward till he was out of sight, and soon after returning, came up to the chariot window, and, delivering a note to Madame Duval, said he had met a boy, who was just coming with it to Howard Grove, from the clerk of Mr. Tyrell.

While she was reading it, he rode round to the other window, and, making a sign for secresy, put into my hand a slip of paper, on which was written, "Whatever happens, be not alarmed,—for *you* are safe,—though you endanger all mankind!"

I readily imagined that Sir Clement must be the author of this note; which prepared me to expect some disagreeable adventure: but I had no time to ponder upon it, for Madame Duval

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had no sooner read her own letter, than, in an angry tone of voice, she exclaimed, "Why, now, what a thing is this! here we're come all this way for nothing!"

She then gave me the note, which informed her, that she need not trouble herself to go to Mr. Tyrell's, as the prisoner had had the address to escape. I congratulated her upon this fortunate incident; but she was so much concerned at having rode so far in vain, that she seemed less pleased than provoked: however, she ordered the man to make what haste he could home, as she hoped, at least, to return before the Captain should suspect what had passed.

The carriage turned about, and we journeyed so quietly for near an hour, that I began to flatter myself we should be suffered to proceed to Howard Grove without further molestation; when suddenly the footman called out, "John, are we going right?"

"Why, I a'n't sure," said the coachman, "but I'm afraid we turned wrong."

"What do you mean by that, sirrah?" said Madame Duval, "why, if you lose your way, we shall be all in the dark."

"I think we should turn to the left," said the footman.

"To the left!" answered the other, "No, no! I'm partly sure we should turn to the right."

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"You had better make some inquiry," said I.

"*Ma foi!*" cried Madame Duval, "we're in a fine hole, here!—they neither of them know no more than the post: however, I'll tell my Lady, as sure as you're born; so you'd better find the way."

"Let's try this lane," said the footman.

"No," said the coachman, "that's the road to Canterbury; we had best go straight on."

"Why that's the direct London road," returned the footman, "and will lead us twenty miles about."

"*Pardie!*" cried Madame Duval, "why, they won't go one way nor t'other! and, now we're come all this jaunt for nothing. I suppose we sha'n't get home to-night!"

"Let's go back to the public-house," said the footman, "and ask for a guide."

"No, no!" said the other, "if we stay here a few minutes, somebody or other will pass by; and the horses are almost knocked up already."

"Well, I protest," cried Madame Duval, "I'd give a guinea to see them sots both horsewhipped! As sure as I'm alive, they're drunk! Ten to one but they'll overturn us next!"

After much debating, they, at length, agreed to go on, till we came to some inn, or met with a passenger who could direct us. We soon

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arrived at a small farm-house, and the footman alighted, and went into it.

In a few minutes he returned, and told us we might proceed, for that he had procured a direction: "But," added he, "it seems there are some thieves hereabouts; and so the best way will be for you to leave your watches and purses with the farmer, who I know very well, and who is an honest man and a tenant of my Lady's."

"Thieves?" cried Madame Duval, looking aghast, "the Lord help us!—I've no doubt but we shall be all murdered!"

The farmer came to us, and we gave him all we were worth, and the servants followed our example. We then proceeded, and Madame Duval's anger so entirely subsided, that in the mildest manner imaginable, she intreated them to make haste, and promised to tell their Lady how diligent and obliging they had been. She perpetually stopped them, to ask if they apprehended any danger, and was at length so much overpowered by her fears, that she made the footman fasten his horse to the back of the carriage, and then come and seat himself within it. My endeavours to encourage her were fruitless; she sat in the middle, held the man by the arm, and protested that if he did but save her life she would make his fortune. Her uneasiness gave me much concern, and it was with the utmost difficulty I for-

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bore to acquaint her that she was imposed upon; but the mutual fear of the Captain's resentment to me, and of her own to him, neither of which would have any moderation, deterred me. As to the footman, he was evidently in torture from restraining his laughter; and I observed that he was frequently obliged to make most horrid grimaces, from pretended fear, in order to conceal his risibility.

Very soon after, "The robbers are coming!" cried the coachman.

The footman opened the door, and jumped out of the chariot.

Madame Duval gave a loud scream.

I could no longer preserve my silence. "For heaven's sake! my dear Madam," said I, "don't be alarmed,—you are in no danger—you are quite safe,—there is nothing but—"

Here the chariot was stopped by two men in masks, who, at each side, put in their hands, as if for our purses. Madame Duval sunk to the bottom of the chariot, and implored their mercy. I shrieked involuntarily, although prepared for the attack: one of them held me fast, while the other tore poor Madame Duval out of the carriage, in spite of her cries, threats, and resistance.

I was really frightened, and trembled exceedingly. "My angel!" cried the man who held

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me, "you cannot surely be alarmed,—do you not know me?—I shall hold myself in eternal abhorrence, if I have really terrified you."

"Indeed, Sir Clement, you have!" cried I,—"but, for heaven's sake! where is Madame Duval?—why is she forced away?"

"She is perfectly safe; the Captain has her in charge: but suffer me now, my adored Miss Anville! to take the only opportunity that is allowed me, to speak upon another—a much dearer, much sweeter subject."

And then he hastily came into the chariot, and seated himself next to me. I would fain have disengaged myself from him, but he would not let me.

"Deny me not, most charming of women!" cried he, "deny me not this only moment that is lent me, to pour forth my soul into your gentle ears,—to tell you how much I suffer from your absence,—how much I dread your displeasure,—and how cruelly I am affected by your coldness!"

"Oh, Sir! this is no time for such language;—pray leave me! pray go to the relief of Madame Duval!—I cannot bear that she should be treated with such indignity."

"And will you—can you command my absence?—When may I speak to you, if not now?—does the Captain suffer me to breathe a moment out

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of his sight?—and are not a thousand impertinent people for ever at your elbow?"

"Indeed, Sir Clement! you must change your style, or I will not hear you. The *impertinent people* you mean, are among my best friends; and you would not, if you really wished me well, speak of them so disrespectfully."

"Wish you well!—O Miss Anville! point but out to me how, in what manner I may convince you of the fervor of my passion,—tell me but what services you will accept from me,—and you shall find my life, my fortune, my whole soul, at your devotion!"

"I want *nothing*, Sir, that you can offer;—I beg you not to talk to me so—so strangely. Pray leave me! and pray assure yourself, you cannot take any method so successless to show any regard for me, as entering into schemes so frightful to Madame Duval and so disagreeable to myself."

"The scheme was the Captain's; I even opposed it: though, I own, I could not refuse myself the so long-wished-for happiness of speaking to you once more, without so many of—your *friends* to watch me; and I had flattered myself, that the note I charged the footman to give you would have prevented the alarm you have received."

"Well, Sir! you have now, I hope, said

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enough; and if you will not go yourself to see for Madame Duval, at least suffer *me* to inquire what is become of her."

"And when may I speak to you again?"

"No matter when, — I don't know, — perhaps—"

"Perhaps what, my angel?"

"Perhaps *never*, Sir! — if you torment me thus."

"Never! O Miss Anville, how cruel, how piercing to my soul is that icy word!—Indeed, I cannot endure such displeasure."

"Then, Sir, you must not provoke it. Pray leave me directly."

"I will, Madam: but let me, at least, make a merit of my obedience,—allow me to hope that you will, in future, be less averse to trusting yourself for a few moments alone with me."

I was surprised at the freedom of this request; but, while I hesitated how to answer it, the other mask came up to the chariot-door, and, in a voice almost stifled with laughter, said, "I've done for her! — the old buck is safe; — but we must sheer off directly, or we shall be all aground."

Sir Clement instantly left me, mounted his horse, and rode off. The Captain, having given some directions to the servants, followed him.

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I was both uneasy and impatient to know the fate of Madame Duval, and immediately got out of the chariot to seek her. I desired the footman to show me which way she was gone; he pointed with his finger, by way of answer, and I saw that he dared not trust his voice to make any other. I walked on a very quick pace, and soon, to my great consternation, perceived the poor lady seated upright in a ditch. I flew to her, with unfeigned concern at her situation. She was sobbing, nay, almost roaring, and in the utmost agony of rage and terror. As soon as she saw me, she redoubled her cries; but her voice was so broken, I could not understand a word she said. I was so much shocked, that it was with difficulty I forbore exclaiming against the cruelty of the Captain, for thus wantonly ill treating her; and I could not forgive myself for having passively suffered the deception. I used my utmost endeavours to comfort her, assuring her of our present safety, and begging her to rise and return to the chariot.

Almost bursting with passion, she pointed to her feet; and, with frightful violence, she actually beat the ground with her hands.

I then saw, that her feet were tied together with a strong rope, which was fastened to the upper branch of a tree, even with an hedge

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which ran along the ditch where she sat. I endeavoured to untie the knot, but soon found it was infinitely beyond my strength. I was, therefore, obliged to apply to the footman; but being very unwilling to add to his mirth, by the sight of Madame Duval's situation, I desired him to lend me a knife; I returned with it, and cut the rope. Her feet were soon disentangled, and then, though with great difficulty, I assisted her to rise. But what was my astonishment, when, the moment she was up, she hit me a violent slap on the face! I retreated from her with precipitation and dread, and she then loaded me with reproaches, which, though almost unintelligible, convinced me that she imagined I had voluntarily deserted her; but she seemed not to have the slightest suspicion that she had not been attacked by real robbers.

I was so much surprised and confounded at the blow, that for some time I suffered her to rave without making any answer; but her extreme agitation, and real suffering soon dispelled my anger, which all turned into compassion. I then told her that I had been forcibly detained from following her, and assured her of my real sorrow at her ill usage.

She began to be somewhat appeased; and I again intreated her to return to the carriage, or give me leave to order that it should draw up

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to the place where we stood. She made no answer, till I told her that the longer we remained still the greater would be the danger of our ride home: struck with this hint, she suddenly and with hasty steps moved forward.

Her dress was in such disorder, that I was quite sorry to have her figure exposed to the servants; who all of them, in imitation of their master, hold her in derision: however, the disgrace was unavoidable.

The ditch, happily, was almost quite dry or she must have suffered still more seriously; yet, so forlorn, so miserable a figure, I never before saw. Her headdress had fallen off; her linen was torn; her negligee had not a pin left in it; her petticoats she was obliged to hold on; and her shoes were perpetually slipping off. She was covered with dirt, weeds, and filth; and her face was really horrible, for the pomatum and powder from her head and the dust from the road were quite *pasted* on her skin by her tears, which, with her *rouge*, made so frightful a mixture, that she hardly looked human.

The servants were ready to die with laughter the moment they saw her; but not all my remonstrances could prevail upon her to get into the carriage, till she had most vehemently reproached them both for not rescuing her. The footman, fixing his eyes on the ground, as if

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fearful of again trusting himself to look at her, protested that the robbers had vowed they would shoot him, if he moved an inch; and that one of them had staid to watch the chariot, while the other carried her off; adding, that the reason of their behaving so barbarously, was to revenge our having secured our purses. Notwithstanding her anger, she gave immediate credit to what he said, and really imagined that her want of money had irritated the pretended robbers to treat her with such cruelty: I determined, therefore, to be carefully upon my guard not to betray the imposition, which could now answer no other purpose, than occasioning an irreparable breach between her and the Captain.

Just as we were seated in the chariot, she discovered the loss which her head had sustained, and called out, "My God! what is becomed of my hair?—why the villain has stole all my curls!"

She then ordered the man to run and see if he could find any of them in the ditch. He went, and, presently returning, produced a great quantity of hair, in such a nasty condition that I was amazed she would take it; and the man, as he delivered it to her, found it impossible to keep his countenance; which she no sooner observed, than all her stormy passions were again raised. She flung the battered curls in his face,

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saying, "Sirrah, what do you grin for? I wish you'd been serv'd so yourself, and you would n't have found it no such joke: you are the impudentest fellow ever I see, and if I find you dare grin at me any more, I shall make no ceremony of boxing your ears."

Satisfied with the threat, the man hastily retired, and we drove on.

Her anger now subsiding into grief, she began most sorrowfully to lament her case. "I believe," she cried, "never nobody was so unlucky as I am! and so here, because I ha'nt had misfortunes enough already, that puppy has made me lose my curls!—Why, I can't see nobody without them:—only look at me;—I was never so bad off in my life before. *Pardi*, if I'd know'd as much, I'd have brought two or three sets with me: but I'd never a thought of such a thing as this."

Finding her now somewhat pacified, I ventured to ask an account of her adventure, which I will endeavour to write in her own words.

"Why, child, all this misfortune comes of that puppy's making us leave our money behind us; for as soon as the robber see I did not put nothing in his hands, he lugged me out of the chariot by main force, and I verily thought he'd have murdered me. He was as strong as

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a lion; I was no more in his hands than a child. But I believe never nobody was so abused before; for he dragged me down the road, pulling and hauling me all the way, as if I'd no more feeling than a horse. I'm sure I wish I could see that man cut up and quartered alive! however, he'll come to the gallows, that's one good thing. So, as soon as we'd got out of sight of the chariot,—though he needn't have been afraid, for if he'd beat me to a mummy, those cowardly fellows wouldn't have said nothing to it.—So when I was got there, what does he do, but all of a sudden, he takes me by both the shoulders, and he gives me such a shake!—*Mon Dieu!* I shall never forget it, if I live to be an hundred. I'm sure I dare say I'm out of joint all over. And, though I made as much noise as ever I could, he took no more notice of it than nothing at all, but there he stood, shaking me in that manner, as if he was doing it for a wager. I'm determined, if it costs me all my fortune, I'll see that villain hanged: he shall be found out, if there's e'er a justice in England. So when he had shook me till he was tired, and I felt all over like a jelly, without saying never a word, he takes and pops me into the ditch! I'm sure I thought he'd have murdered me, as much as I ever thought any thing in my life, for he kept

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bumping me about, as if he thought nothing too bad for me. However, I'm resolved I'll never leave my purse behind me again, the longest day I have to live. So when he couldn't stand over me no longer, he holds out his hands again for my money; but he was as cunning as could be, for he wouldn't speak a word, because I shouldn't swear to his voice;—however, that sha'nt save him, for I'll swear to him any day in the year, if I can but catch him. So, when I told him I had no money, he fell to jerking me again; just as if he had but that moment begun! and, after that, he got me close by a tree, and out of his pocket he pulls a great cord! —It's a wonder I did not swoon away, for, as sure as you're alive, he was going to hang me to that tree. I screamed like any thing mad, and told him if he would but spare my life, I'd never prosecute him, nor tell nobody what he'd done to me: so he stood some time, quite in a brown study, a thinking what he should do. And so, after that, he forced me to sit down in the ditch, and he tied my feet together, just as you see them; and then, as if he had not done enough, he twitched off my cap, and, without saying nothing, got on his horse, and left me in that condition; thinking, I suppose, that I might lie there and perish."

Though this narrative almost compelled me to

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laugh, yet I was really irritated with the Captain, for carrying his love of tormenting,—*sport*, he calls it,—to such barbarous and unjustifiable extremes. I consoled and soothed her as well as I was able, and told her that, since M. Du Bois had escaped, I hoped when she recovered from her fright, all would end well.

"Fright, child!" repeated she, "why that's not half;—I promise you, I wish it was; but here I'm bruised from top to toe, and it's well if ever I have the right use of my limbs again. However, I'm glad the villain got nothing but his trouble for his pains. But here the worst is to come, for I can't go out, because I've got no curls, and so he'll be escaped before I can get to the Justice to stop him. I'm resolved I'll tell Lady Howard how her man served me, for if he hadn't made me fling 'em away, I dare say I could have pinned them up well enough for the country."

"Perhaps Lady Howard may be able to lend you a cap that will wear without them."

"Lady Howard, indeed! why, do you think I'd wear one of her dowdies? No, I'll promise you, I sha'n't put on no such disguisement. It's the unluckiest thing in the world that I did not make the man pick up the curls again; but he put me in such a passion, I could not think of nothing. I know I can't get none at Howard

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Grove for love nor money; for of all the stupid places ever I see, that Howard Grove is the worst; there's never no getting nothing one wants."

This sort of conversation lasted till we arrived at our journey's end; and then, a new distress occurred; Madame Duval was eager to speak to Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan, and to relate her misfortunes, but she could not endure that Sir Clement or the Captain should see her in such disorder, for she said they were so ill-natured, that, instead of pitying her, they would only make a jest of her disasters. She therefore sent me first into the house, to wait for an opportunity of their being out of the way, that she might steal up stairs unobserved. In this I succeeded, as the gentlemen thought it most prudent not to seem watching for her; though they both contrived to divert themselves with peeping at her as she passed.

She went immediately to bed, where she had her supper. Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan both of them very kindly sat with her, and listened to her tale with compassionate attention; while Miss Mirvan and I retired to our own room, where I was very glad to end the troubles of the day in a comfortable conversation.

The Captain's raptures, during supper, at the

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success of his plan, were boundless, I spoke, afterwards, to Mrs. Mirvan, with the openness which her kindness encourages, and begged her to remonstrate with him upon the cruelty of tormenting Madame Duval so causelessly. She promised to take the first opportunity of starting the subject, but said he was, at present, so much elated that he would not listen to her with any patience. However, should he make any new efforts to molest her, I can by no means consent to be passive. Had I imagined he would have been so violent, I would have risked his anger in her defence much sooner.

She has kept her bed all day, and declares she is almost bruised to death.

Adieu, dear Sir! What a long letter have I written! I could almost fancy I sent it you from London!

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LETTER III.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Howard Grove, May 15th.

THIS insatiable Captain, if left to himself, would not, I believe, rest till he had tormented Madame Duval into a fever. He seems to have no delight but in terrifying or provoking her, and all his thoughts apparently turn upon inventing such methods as may do it most effectually.

She had her breakfast again in bed yesterday morning; but during ours, the Captain, with a very significant look at Sir Clement, gave us to understand, that he thought she had now rested long enough to bear the hardships of a fresh campaign.

His meaning was obvious, and, therefore, I resolved to endeavour immediately to put a stop to his intended exploits. When breakfast was over, I followed Mrs. Mirvan out of the parlor, and begged her to lose no time in pleading the cause of Madame Duval with the Captain. "My love,"

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answered she, "I have already expostulated with him; but all I can say is fruitless, while his favorite Sir Clement contrives to urge him on."

"Then I will go and speak to Sir Clement," said I; "for I know he will desist, if I request him."

"Have a care, my dear!" said she, smiling; "it is sometimes dangerous to make requests to men, who are too desirous of receiving them."

"Well, then, my dear Madam! will you give me leave to speak myself to the Captain?"

"Willingly; nay, I will accompany you to him."

I thanked her, and we went to seek him. He was walking in the garden with Sir Clement. Mrs. Mirvan most obligingly made an opening for my purpose, by saying, "Mr. Mirvan, I have brought a petitioner with me."

"Why, what's the matter now?" cried he.

I was fearful of making him angry, and stammerred very much, when I told him, I hoped he had no new plan for alarming Madame Duval.

"*New* plan!" cried he, "why, you don't suppose the *old* one would do again, do you? Not but what it was a very good one, only I doubt she wouldn't bite."

"Indeed, Sir," said I, "she has already suffered too much; and I hope you will pardon me, if I take the liberty of telling you, that I think

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it my duty to do all in my power to prevent her being again so much terrified."

A sullen gloominess instantly clouded his face; and turning short from me, he said, I might do as I pleased, but that I should much sooner repent than repair my officiousness.

I was too much disconcerted at this rebuff to attempt making any answer; and, finding that Sir Clement warmly espoused my cause, I walked away, and left them to discuss the point together.

Mrs. Mirvan, who never speaks to the Captain when he is out of humor, was glad to follow me, and, with her usual sweetness, made a thousand apologies for her husband's illmanners.

When I left her, I went to Madame Duval, who was just risen, and employed in examining the clothes she had on the day of her ill usage.

"Here's a sight!" cried she. "Come here, child!—only look—*Pandie*, so long as I've lived, I never see so much before! Why, all my things are spoilt, and, what's worse, my sacque was as good as new. Here's the second negligee I've had used in this manner!—I am sure I was a fool to put in on, in such a lonesome place as this; however, if I stay here these ten years, I'll never put on another good gown, that I'm resolved."

"Will you let the maid try if she can iron it out, or clean it, Ma'am?"

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"No, she'll only make bad worse:—but look here, now, here's a cloke! *Mon Dieu!* why, it looks like a dishclout! Of all the unluckinesses that ever I met, this is the worst! for, do you know, I bought it but the day before I left Paris?—Besides, into the bargain, my cap's quite gone; where the villain twitched it, I don't know, but I never see no more of it from that time to this. Now, you must know, this was the becomingest cap I had in the world, for I've never another with pink ribbon in it; and to tell you the truth, if I hadn't thought to have seen M. Du Bois, I'd no more have put it on than I'd have flown; for as to what one wears in such a stupid place as this, it signifies no more than nothing at all."

She then told me, that she had been thinking all night of a contrivance to hinder the Captain from finding out her loss of curls; which was, having a large gauze handkerchief pinned on her head as a hood, and saying she had the toothach.

"To tell you the truth," added she, "I believe that Captain is one of the worst men in the world; he's always making a joke of me; and as to his being a gentleman, he has no more manners than a bear, for he's always upon the grin when one's in distress; and, I declare, I'd rather be done any thing to than laugh'd at; for, to my mind, it's one or other the disagreeablest thing in the world."

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Mrs. Mirvan, I found, had been endeavouring to dissuade her from the design she had formed, of having recourse to the law in order to find out the supposed robbers; for she dreads a discovery of the Captain, during Madame Duval's stay at Howard Grove, as it could not fail being productive of infinite commotion: she has, therefore, taken great pains to show the inutility of applying to justice, unless she were more able to describe the offenders against whom she would appear; and has assured her, that, as she neither heard their voices nor saw their faces, she cannot possibly swear to their persons or obtain any redress.

Madame Duval, in telling me this, extremely lamented her hard fate that she was thus prevented from revenging her injuries; which, however, she vowed she would not be persuaded to *pocket tamely*: "because," added she, "if such villains as these are let to have their own way, and nobody takes no notice of their imprudence, they'll make no more ado than nothing at all of tying people in ditches, and such things as that: however, I shall consult with M. Du Bois, as soon as I can ferret out where he's hid himself. I'm sure I've a right to his advice, for it's all along of his gaping about at the Tower that I've met with these misfortunes."

"Mons. Du Bois," said I, "will, I am sure,

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be very sorry when he hears what has happened."

"And what good will that do now?—that won't unspoil all my clothes; I can tell him, I a'n't much obliged to him, though it's no fault of his;—yet it i'n't the less provokinger for that. I'm sure, if he had been there, to have seen me served in that manner, and put neck and heels into a ditch, he'd no more have thought it was me, than the Pope of Rome. I'll promise you, whatever you may think of it, I sha'n't have no rest, night nor day, till I find out that rogue."

"I have no doubt, Madam, but you will soon discover him."

"*Pardi*, if I do I'll hang him, as sure as fate!—but what's the oddest, is, that he should take such a special spite against *me*, above all the rest! it was as much for nothing, as could be, for I don't know what I had done, so particular bad, to be used in that manner: I'm sure, I hadn't given him any offence, as I know of, for I never see his face all the time; and as to screaming a little, I think it's very hard if one mustn't do such a thing as that, when one's put in fear of one's life."

During this conversation, she endeavoured to adjust her headdress, but could not at all please herself. Indeed, had I not been present, I should have thought it impossible for a woman

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at her time of life to be so very difficult in regard to dress. What she may have in view I cannot imagine; but the labor of the toilette seems the chief business of her life.

When I left her, in my way down stairs, I met Sir Clement, who, with great earnestness, said he must not be denied the honor of a moment's conversation with me; and then, without waiting for an answer, he led me to the garden; at the door of which, however, I absolutely insisted upon stopping.

He seemed very serious, and said, in a grave tone of voice, "At length, Miss Anville, I flatter myself I have hit upon an expedient that will oblige you; and therefore, though it is death to myself, I will put it in practice."

I begged him to explain himself.

"I saw your desire of saving Madame Duval, and scarce could I refrain giving the brutal Captain my real opinion of his savage conduct; but I am unwilling to quarrel with him, lest I should be denied entrance into a house which you inhabit: I have been endeavouring to prevail with him to give up his absurd new scheme, but I find him impenetrable:—I have therefore determined to make a pretence for suddenly leaving this place, dear as it is to me, and containing all I most admire and adore;—and I will stay in

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town till the violence of this boobyish humor is abated."

He stopped; but I was silent, for I knew not what I ought to say. He took my hand, which he pressed to his lips, saying, "And must I, then, Miss Anville! must I quit you—sacrifice voluntarily my greatest felicity,—and yet not be honored with one word, one look of approbation?"

I withdrew my hand, and said, with a half laugh, "You know so well, Sir Clement, the value of the favors you confer, that it would be superfluous for me to point it out."

"Charming, charming girl! how does your wit, your understanding, rise upon me daily! and must I, can I part with you?—will no other method—"

"Oh, Sir! do you so soon repent the good office you had planned for Madame Duval?"

"For Madame Duval!—cruel creature! and will you not even suffer me to place to your account the sacrifice I am about to make?"

"You must place it, Sir, to what account you please; but I am too much in haste now to stay here any longer."

And then I would have left him, but he held me, and, rather impatiently, said, "If, then, I cannot be so happy as to oblige *you*, Miss Anville, you must not be surprised, should I seek

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to oblige myself. If my scheme is not honored with your approbation, for which alone it was formed, why should I, to my own infinite dissatisfaction, pursue it?"

We were then, for a few minutes, both silent; I was really unwilling he should give up a plan which would so effectually break into the Captain's designs, and, at the same time, save me the pain of disobliging him; and I should instantly and thankfully have accepted his offered civility, had not Mrs. Mirvan's caution made me fearful. However, when he pressed me to speak, I said, in an ironical voice, "I had thought, Sir, that the very strong sense you have yourself of the favor you propose to me, would sufficiently have repaid you; but, as I was mistaken, I must thank you myself. And now," making a low curtsey, "I hope, Sir, you are satisfied."

"Loveliest of thy sex!"—he began, but I forced myself from him, and ran up stairs.

Soon after, Miss Mirvan told me that Sir Clement had just received a letter, which obliged him instantly to leave the Grove, and that he had actually ordered a chaise. I then acquainted her with the real state of the affair. Indeed, I conceal nothing from her; she is so gentle and sweet-tempered, that it gives me great pleasure to place an entire confidence in her.

At dinner, I must own, we all missed him;

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for though the flightiness of his behaviour to me, when we are by ourselves, is very distressing, yet, in large companies and general conversation, he is extremely entertaining and agreeable. As to the Captain, he has been so much chagrined at his departure, that he has scarce spoken a word since he went: but Madame Duval, who made her first public appearance since her accident, was quite in raptures that she escaped seeing him.

The money, which we left at the farmhouse, has been returned to us. What pains the Captain must have taken to arrange and manage the adventures which he chose we should meet with! Yet he must certainly be discovered, for Madame Duval is already very much perplexed at having received a letter this morning from M. Du Bois, in which he makes no mention of his imprisonment. However, she has so little suspicion, that she imputes his silence upon the subject to his fears that the letter might be intercepted.

Not one opportunity could I meet with, while Sir Clement was here, to inquire after his friend Lord Orville; but I think it was strange he should never mention him unasked: indeed, I rather wonder that Mrs. Mirvan herself did not introduce the subject, for she always seemed particularly attentive to him.

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And now, once more, all my thoughts involuntarily turn upon the letter I so soon expect from Paris. This visit of Sir Clement has, however, somewhat diverted my fears, and therefore I am very glad he made it at this time.

Adieu, my dear Sir.

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LETTER IV.

SIR JOHN BELMONT TO LADY HOWARD.

Paris, May 11.

MADAM,

I HAVE this moment the honor of your Ladyship's letter, and I will not wait another before I return an answer.

It seldom happens that a man, though extolled as a saint, is really without blemish; or that another, though reviled as a devil, is really without humanity: perhaps the time is not very distant, when I may have the honor to convince your Ladyship of this truth, in regard to Mr. Villars and myself.

As to the young lady, whom Mr. Villars so obligingly proposes presenting to me, I wish her all the happiness to which, by your Ladyship's account, she seems entitled; and, if she has a third part of the merit of *her* to whom you compare her, I doubt not but Mr. Villars will be more successful in every other applica-

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tion he may make for her advantage, than he can ever be in any with which he may be pleased to favor me.

I have the honor to be,

Madam,

your Ladyship's most humble

and most obedient servant,

JOHN BELMONT.

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LETTER V.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Howard Grove, May 18.

WELL, my dear Sir, all is now over! the letter so anxiously expected is at length arrived, and my doom is fixed. The various feelings which oppress me I have not language to describe; nor need I,—you know my heart, you have yourself formed it, and its sensations upon this occasion you may but too readily imagine.

Outcast as I am, and rejected for ever by him to whom I of right belong,—shall I now implore *your* continued protection?—no, no,—I will not offend your generous heart, which, open to distress, has no wish but to relieve it, with an application that would seem to imply a doubt. I am more secure than ever of your kindness, since you now know upon that is my sole dependence.

I endeavour to bear this stroke with composure, and in such a manner as if I had already received your counsel and consolation. Yet, at

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times, my emotions are almost too much for me. Oh, Sir! what a letter for a parent to write! Must I not myself be deaf to the voice of Nature, if I could endure to be thus absolutely abandoned, without regret? I dare not even to you, nor would I, could I help it, to myself, acknowledge all that I think; for, indeed, I have sometimes sentiments upon this rejection, which my strongest sense of duty can scarcely correct. Yet suffer me to ask,—might not this answer have been softened?—was it not enough to disclaim me for ever, without treating me with contempt and wounding me with derision?

But, while I am thus thinking of myself, I forget how much more he is the object of sorrow than I am! Alas, what amends can he make himself, for the anguish he is hoarding up for time to come! My heart bleeds for him, whenever this reflection occurs to me.

What is said of *you*,—my protector, my friend, my benefactor!—I dare not trust myself to comment upon. Gracious heaven! what a return for goodness so unparalleled!

I would fain endeavour to divert my thoughts from this subject, but even that is not in my power; for, afflicting as this letter is to me, I find that it will not be allowed to conclude the affair, though it does all my expectations: for Madame Duval has determined not to let it

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rest here. She heard the letter in great wrath, and protested she would not be so easily answered; she regretted her facility in having been prevailed upon to yield the direction of this affair to those who knew not how to manage it, and vowed she would herself undertake and conduct it in future.

It is in vain that I have pleaded against her resolution, and besought her to forbear an attack, where she has nothing to expect but resentment; especially as there seems to be a hint, that Lady Howard will one day be more openly dealt with: she will not hear me; she is furiously bent upon a project which is terrible to think of,—for she means to go herself to Paris, take me with her, and there, *face to face*, demand justice!

How to appease or to persuade her, I know not: but for the universe would I not be dragged, in such a manner, to an interview so awful, with a parent I have never yet beheld!

Lady Howard and Mrs. Miryan are both of them infinitely shocked at the present situation of affairs, and they seem to be even more kind to me than ever; and my dear Maria, who is the friend of my heart, uses her utmost efforts to console me; and, when she fails in her design, with still greater kindness she sympathises in my sorrow.

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I very much rejoice, however, that Sir Clement Willoughby had left us before this letter arrived. I am sure the general confusion of the house would otherwise have betrayed to him the whole of a tale, which I now, more than ever, wish to have buried in oblivion.

Lady Howard thinks I ought not to disoblige Madame Duval, yet she acknowledges the impropriety of my accompanying her abroad upon such an enterprise. Indeed, I would rather die, than force myself into his presence. But so vehement is Madame Duval, that she would instantly have compelled me to attend her to town, in her way to Paris, had not Lady Howard so far exerted herself, as to declare she could by no means consent to my quitting her house till she gave me up to you, by whose permission I had entered it.

She was extremely angry at this denial; and the Captain, by his sneers and raillery, so much increased her rage, that she has positively declared, should your next letter dispute her authority to guide me by her own pleasure, she will without hesitation make a journey to Berry Hill, and *teach you to know who she is.*

Should she put this threat in execution, nothing could give me greater uneasiness; for her violence and volubility would almost distract you.

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Unable as I am to act for myself, or to judge what conduct I ought to pursue, how grateful do I feel myself that I have such a guide and director to counsel and instruct me as yourself!

Adieu, my dearest Sir! heaven, I trust, will never let me live to be repulsed and derided by *you*, to whom I may now sign myself

Wholly your

EVELINA.

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LETTER VI.

MR. VILLARS TO EVELINA.

Berry-Hill, May 21.

LET not my Evelina be depressed by a stroke of fortune for which she is not responsible. No breach of duty, on your part, has incurred the unkindness which has been shown you; nor have you, by any act of imprudence, provoked either censure or reproach. Let me intreat you, therefore, my dearest child, to support yourself with that courage which your innocency ought to inspire; and let all the affliction you allow yourself be for him only, who, not having that support, must one day be but too severely sensible how much he wants it.

The hint thrown out, concerning myself, is wholly unintelligible to me: my heart, I dare own, fully acquits me of vice, but *without blemish* I have never ventured to pronounce myself. However, it seems his intention to be hereafter more explicit; and *then*,—should any thing appear, that has on *my* part contributed to those

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misfortunes we lament, let me, at least, say, that the most partial of my friends cannot be so much astonished as I shall myself be at such a discovery.

The mention, also, of any *future applications* I may make, is equally beyond my comprehension. But I will not dwell upon a subject which almost compels from me reflections that cannot but be wounding to a heart so formed for filial tenderness as my Evelina's. There is an air of mystery throughout the letter, the explanation of which I will await in silence.

The scheme of Madame Duval is such as might be reasonably expected from a woman so little inured to disappointment, and so totally incapable of considering the delicacy of your situation. Your averseness to her plan gives me pleasure, for it exactly corresponds with my own. Why will she not make the journey she projects by herself?—she would not have even the wish of an opposition to encounter; and then, once more, might my child and myself be left to the quiet enjoyment of that peaceful happiness which she alone has interrupted. As to her coming hither, I could, indeed, dispense with such a visit; but, if she will not be satisfied with my refusal by letter, I must submit to the task of giving it her in person.

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My impatience for your return is increased by your account of Sir Clement Willoughby's visit to Howard Grove. I am but little surprised at the perseverance of his assiduities to interest you in his favor; but I am very much hurt that you should be exposed to addresses, which, by their privacy, have an air that shocks me. You cannot, my love, be too circumspect: the slightest carelessness, on your part, will be taken advantage of by a man of his disposition. It is not sufficient for you to be reserved; his conduct even calls for your resentment; and should he again, as will doubtless be his endeavour, contrive to solicit your favor in private, let your disdain and displeasure be so marked, as to constrain a change in his behaviour: though, indeed, should his visit be repeated while you remain at the Grove, Lady Howard must pardon me if I shorten yours.

Adieu, my child! You will always make my respects to the hospitable family to which we are so much obliged.

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LETTER VII.

MR. VILLARS TO LADY HOWARD.

DEAR MADAM, Berry Hill, May 27.

I BELIEVE your Ladyship will not be surprised at hearing I have had a visit from Madame Duval, as I doubt not her having made known her intention before she left Howard Grove. I would gladly have excused myself this meeting, could I have avoided it decently; but, after so long a journey, it was not possible to refuse her admittance.

She told me, that she came to Berry Hill in consequence of a letter I had sent to her granddaughter, in which I had forbid her going to Paris. Very roughly she then called me to account for the authority which I assumed; and, had I been disposed to have argued with her, she would very angrily have disputed the right by which I used it. But I declined all debating: I therefore listened very quietly, till she had so much fatigued herself with talking, that she was glad, in her turn, to be silent; and then I begged

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to know the purport of her visit. She answered that she came to make me relinquish the power I had usurped over her grandaughter, and assured me she would not quit the place till she succeeded.

But I will not trouble your Ladyship with the particulars of this disagreeable conversation; nor should I, but on account of the result, have chosen so unpleasant a subject for your perusal: however, I will be as concise as I possibly can, that the better occupations of your Ladyship's time may be the less impeded.

When she found me inexorable in refusing Evelina's attending her to Paris, she peremptorily insisted that she should, at least, live with her in London, till Sir John Belmont's return. I remonstrated against this scheme with all the energy in my power; but the contest was vain; she lost her patience, and I my time. She declared that if I was resolute in opposing her, she would instantly make a will, in which she would leave all her fortune to strangers; though, otherwise, she intended her grandaughter for her sole heiress.

To me, I own, this threat seemed of little consequence; I have long accustomed myself to think, that, with a competency, of which she is sure, my child might be as happy as in the possession of millions: but the incertitude of her future fate deters me from following implicitly

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the dictates of my present judgment. The connexions she may hereafter form, the style of life for which she may be destined, and the future family to which she may belong, are considerations which give but too much weight to the menaces of Madame Duval. In short, Madam, after a discourse infinitely tedious, I was obliged, though very reluctantly, to compromise with this ungovernable woman, by consenting that Evelina should pass one month with her.

I never made a concession with so bad a grace, or so much regret. The violence and vulgarity of this woman, her total ignorance of propriety, the family to which she is related, and the company she is likely to keep, are objections so forcible to her having the charge of this dear child, that nothing less than my diffidence of the right I have of depriving her of so large a fortune, would have induced me to listen to her proposal: indeed we parted at last equally discontented; she, at what I had refused; I, at what I had granted.

It now only remains for me to return your Ladyship my humble acknowledgements for the kindness which you have so liberally shown to my ward: and to beg you would have the goodness to part with her, when Madame Duval thinks proper to claim the promise which she has extorted from me. I am, dear Madam, etc.

ARTHUR VILLARS.

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LETTER VIII.

MR. VILLARS TO EVELINA.

Berry Hill, May 28.

WITH a reluctance with occasions me inexpressible uneasiness, I have been almost compelled to consent that my Evelina should quit the protection of the hospitable and respectable Lady Howard, and accompany Madame Duval to a city which I had hoped she would never again have entered. But alas, my dear child! we are the slaves of custom, the dupes of prejudice, and dare not stem the torrent of an opposing world, even though our judgments condemn our compliance! however, since the die is cast, we must endeavour to make the best of it.

You will have occasion, in the course of the month you are to pass with Madame Duval, for all the circumspection and prudence you can call to your aid: she will not, I know, propose any thing to you which she thinks wrong herself; but you must learn not only to *judge* but to *act* for yourself: if any schemes are started, any

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engagements made, which your understanding represents to you as improper, exert yourself resolutely in avoiding them, and do not, by a too passive facility, risk the censure of the world or your own future regret.

You cannot too assiduously attend to Madame Duval herself; but I would wish you to mix as little as possible with her associates, who are not likely to be among those whose acquaintance would reflect credit upon you. Remember, my dear Evelina, nothing is so delicate as the reputation of a woman: it is, at once, the most beautiful and most brittle of all human things.

Adieu, my beloved child! I shall be but ill at ease till this month is elapsed.

A. V.

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LETTER IX.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

London, June 6.

ONCE more, my dearest Sir! I write to you from this great city. Yesterday morning, with the truest concern, I quitted the dear inhabitants of Howard Grove, and most impatiently shall I count the days till I see them again. Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan took leave of me with the most flattering kindness; but indeed I knew not how to part with Maria, whose own apparent sorrow redoubled mine. She made me promise to send her a letter every post; and I shall write to her with the same freedom, and almost the same confidence, you allow me to make use of to yourself.

The Captain was very civil to me, but he wrangled with poor Madame Duval to the last moment; and, taking me aside, just before we got into the chaise, he said, "Hark'ee, Miss Anville! I've a favor for to ask of you, which is this; that you will write us word how the old

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gentlewoman finds herself, when she sees it was all a trick: and what the French lubber says to it, and all about it."

I answered that I would obey him, though I was very little pleased with the commission, which, to me, was highly improper; but he will either treat me as an *informer*, or make me a party in his frolic.

As soon as we drove away, Madame Duval, with much satisfaction, exclaimed "*Dieu merci*, we've got off at last! I'm sure I never desire to see that place again. It's a wonder I've got away alive; for I believe I've had the worst luck ever was known from the time I set my foot upon the threshold. I know I wish I'd never a gone. Besides, into the bargain, it's the most dullest place in all Christendom: there's never no diversions, nor nothing at all."

Then she bewailed M. Du Bois, concerning whose adventures she continued to make various conjectures during the rest of our journey.

When I asked her what part of London she should reside in, she told me that Mr. Branghton was to meet us at an inn, and would conduct us to a lodging. Accordingly, we proceeded to a house in Bishopsgate-street, and were led by a waiter into a room, where we found Mr. Branghton.

He received us very civilly, but seemed rather

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surprised at seeing me, saying, "Why, I didn't think of your bringing Miss; however, she's very welcome."

"I'll tell you how it was," said Madame Duval: "you must know I've a mind to take the girl to Paris, that she may see something of the world, and improve herself a little; besides, I've another reason, that you and I will talk more about; but do you know, that meddling old parson as I told you of would not let her go: however, I'm resolved I'll be even with him, for I shall take her on with me, without saying never a word more to nobody."

I started at this intimation, which very much surprised me. But I am very glad she has discovered her intention, as I shall be carefully upon my guard not to venture from town with her.

Mr. Branghton then hoped we had passed our time agreeably in the country.

"O Lord, cousin!" cried she, "I've been the miserablest creature in the world! I'm sure all the horses in London sha'n't drag me into the country again of one while: why, how do you think I've been served?—only guess."

"Indeed, cousin, I can't pretend to do that."

"Why, then, I'll tell you. Do you know, I've been robbed?—that is, the villain would have robbed me if he could, only I'd secured all my money."

"Why, then, cousin! I think your loss can't have been very great."

"O Lord! you don't know what you're a saying; you're talking in the unthinkingest manner in the world: why it was all along of not having no money, that I met with that misfortune."

"How's that, cousin? I don't see what great misfortune you can have met with, if you'd secured all your money."

"That's because you don't know nothing of the matter: for there the villain came to the chaise, and because we hadn't got nothing to give him, though he'd no more right to our money than the man in the moon, yet, do you know, he fell into the greatest passion ever you see, and abused me in such a manner, and put me in a ditch, and got a rope, o' purpose to hang me, — and I'm sure, if that wasn't misfortune enough, why I don't know what is."

"This is a hard case, indeed, cousin. But why don't you go to Justice Fielding?"

"Oh! as to that, I'm a going to him directly; but only I want first to see poor M. Du Bois; for the oddest thing of all is, that he has wrote to me, and never said nothing of where he is, nor what's become of him, nor nothing else."

"M. Du Bois! why he's at my house at this very time."

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"M. Du Bois at your house! well, I declare this is the surprisingest part of all! however, I assure you, I think he might have comed for me as well as you, considering what I have gone through on his account; for, to tell you the truth, it was all along of him that I met with that accident; so I don't take it very kind of him, I promise you."

"Well, but cousin, tell me some of the particulars of this affair."

"As to the particulars, I'm sure they'd make your hair stand an end to hear them; however the beginning of it all was through the fault of M. Du Bois: but I'll assure you, he may take care of himself in future, since he don't so much as come to see if I'm dead or alive;—but there I went for him to a justice of peace, and rode all out of the way, and did every thing in the world, and was used worser than a dog, and all for the sake of serving of him; and now, you see, he don't so much—well! I was a fool for my pains, —however, he may get somebody else to be treated so another time; for if he's taken up every day in the week, I'll never go after him no more."

This occasioned an explanation, in the course of which Madame Duval, to her utter amazement, heard that M. Du Bois had never left London during her absence! nor did Mr. Brangh-

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ton believe that he had ever been to the Tower, or met with any kind of accident.

Almost instantly, the whole truth of the transaction seemed to *rush upon her mind*, and her wrath was inconceivably violent. She asked me a thousand questions in a breath, but, fortunately, was too vehement to attend to my embarrassment, which must, otherwise, have betrayed my knowledge of the deceit. Revenge was her first wish; and she vowed she would go the next morning to Justice Fielding, and inquire what punishment she might lawfully inflict upon the Captain for his assault.

I believe we were an hour in Bishopsgate-street, before poor Madame Duval could allow any thing to be mentioned but her own story: at length, however, Mr. Branghton told her, that M. Du Bois, and all his own family, were waiting for her at his house; a hackney-coach was then called, and we proceeded to Snowhill.

Mr. Branghton's house is small and inconvenient; though his shop, which takes in all the ground floor, is large and commodious. I believe I told you before that he is a silversmith.

We were conducted up two pair of stairs; for the dining-room, Mr. Branghton told us, was *let*. His two daughters, their brother, M. Du Bois, and a young man, were at tea. They had waited some time for Madame Duval, but I found

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they had not any expectation that I should accompany her; and the young ladies, I believe, were rather more surprised than pleased when I made my appearance; for they seemed hurt that I should see their apartment. Indeed, I would willingly have saved them that pain, had it been in my power.

The first person who saw me was M. Du Bois: "*Ah, Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed he, "*voilà Mademoiselle!*"

"Goodness!" cried young Branghton, "if there isn't Miss!"

"Lord, so there is!" said Miss Polly; "well, I'm sure I should never have dreamed of Miss's coming."

"Nor I neither, I'm sure!" cried Miss Branghton, "or else I would not have been in this room to see her; I'm quite ashamed about it,—only not thinking of seeing any body but my aunt—however, Tom, it's all your fault; for you know very well I wanted to borrow Mr. Smith's room, only you were so *grumpy* you would not let me."

"Lord, what signifies!" said the brother, "I dare be sworn Miss has been up two pair of stairs before now;—Ha'n't you, Miss?"

I begged that I might not give them the least disturbance, and assured them that I had not any choice in regard to what room we sat in.

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"Well," said Miss Polly, "when you come next, Miss, we'll have Mr. Smith's room; and it's a very pretty one, and only up one pair of stairs, and nicely furnished, and every thing."

"To say the truth," said Miss Branghton, "I thought that my cousin would not, upon any account, have come to town in the summer-time; for it's not at all the *fashion*,--so, to be sure, thinks I, she'll stay till September, when the playhouses open."

This was my reception, which I believe you will not call a very *cordial* one. Madame Duval, who, after having severely reprimanded M. Du Bois for his negligence, was just entering upon the story of her misfortunes, now wholly engaged the company.

M. Du Bois listened to her with a look of the utmost horror, repeatedly lifting up his eyes and hands, and exclaiming, "*O ciel! quel barbare!*" The young ladies gave her the most earnest attention; but their brother, and the young man, kept a broad grin upon their faces during the whole recital. She was, however, too much engaged to observe them: but when she mentioned having been tied in a ditch, young Branghton, no longer able to constrain himself, burst into a loud laugh, declaring that he had never heard any thing so funny in his life! His laugh was heartily re-echoed by his

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friend; the Miss Branghtons could not resist the example; and poor Madame Duval, to her extreme amazement, was absolutely overpowered and stopped by the violence of their mirth.

For some minutes the room seemed quite in an uproar; the rage of Madame Duval, the astonishment of M. Du Bois, and the angry interrogatories of Mr. Branghton, on one side; the convulsing tittering of the sisters and the loud laughs of the young men on the other, occasioned such noise, passion, and confusion, that had any one stopped an instant on the stairs, he must have concluded himself in Bedlam: at length, however, the father brought them to order; and, half-laughing, half-frightened, they made Madame Duval some very awkward apologies. But she would not be prevailed upon to continue her narrative, till they had protested they were laughing at the Captain, and not at her. Appeased by this, she resumed her story; which, by the help of stuffing handkerchiefs into their mouths, the young people heard with tolerable decency.

Everybody agreed that the ill usage the Captain had given her was *actionable*, and Mr. Branghton said he was sure she might recover what damages she pleased, since she had been put in fear of her life.

She then, with great delight, declared, that she would lose no time in satisfying her re-

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venge, and vowed she would not be contented with less than half his fortune: "For though," said she, "I don't put no value upon the money, because, *Dieu merci!* I ha'n't no want of it, yet I don't wish for nothing so much as to punish that fellow; for I'm sure, whatever's the cause of it, he owes me a great *grudge*, and I know no more what it's for than you do; but he's always been doing me one spite or other, ever since I knew him."

Soon after tea, Miss Branghton took an opportunity to tell me, in a whisper, that the young man I saw was a lover of her sister's; that his name was Brown, and that he was a haberdasher, with many other particulars of his circumstances and family; and then she declared her utter aversion to the thoughts of such a match; but added, that her sister had no manner of spirit or ambition, though, for her part, she would ten times rather die an old maid, than marry any person but a gentleman. "And, for that matter," added she, "I believe Polly herself don't care much for him, only she's in such a hurry, because, I suppose, she's a mind to be married before me; however, she's very welcome, for, I'm sure, I don't care a pin's point whether I ever marry at all; — it's all one to me."

Sometime after this, Miss Polly contrived to

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tell *her* story. She assured me, with much tittering, that her sister was in a great fright lest she should be married first. "So I make her believe that I will," continued she, "for I love dearly to plague her a little; though, I declare, I don't intend to have Mr. Brown in reality; I'm sure I don't like him half well enough,—do you, Miss?"

"It is not possible for me to judge of his merits," said I, "as I am entirely a stranger to him."

"But what do you think of him, Miss?"

"Why, really, I—I don't know—"

"But do you think him handsome? Some people reckon him to have a good pretty person,—but, I'm sure, for my part, I think he's monstrous ugly:—don't *you*, Miss?

"I am no judge,—but I think his person is very—very well."

"Very well?—Why, pray, Miss," in a tone of vexation, "what fault can you find with it?"

"Oh, none at all!"

"I'm sure you must be very illnatured if you could. Now, there's Biddy says she thinks nothing of him,—but I know its all out of spite. You must know, Miss, it makes her as mad as can be, that I should have a lover before her; but she's so proud that nobody will court her, and I often tell her she'll die an

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old maid. But the thing is, she has taken it into her head, to have a liking for Mr. Smith, as lodges on the first floor; but, Lord! he'll never have her, for he's quite a fine gentleman; and besides, Mr. Brown heard him say, one day, that he'd never marry as long as he lived, for he'd no opinion of matrimony."

"And did you tell your sister this?"

"Oh, to be sure! I told her directly; but she did not mind me; however, if she will be a fool, she must."

This extreme want of affection and goodnature increased the distaste I already felt for these unamiable sisters; and a confidence, so entirely unsolicited and unnecessary, manifested equally their folly and their want of decency.

I was very glad when the time for our departing arrived. Mr. Branghton said our lodgings were in Holborn, that we might be near his house, and neighbourly. He accompanied us to them himself.

Our rooms are large, and not inconvenient; our landlord is an hosier. I am sure I have a thousand reasons to rejoice that I am so little known; for my present situation is, in every respect, very unenviable; and I would not for the world be seen by any acquaintance of Mrs. Mirvan.

This morning Madame Duval, attended by all

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the Branghtons, actually went to a justice in the neighbourhood, to report the Captain's ill usage of her. I had great difficulty in excusing myself from being of the party, which would have given me very serious concern. Indeed, I was extremely anxious, though at home, till I heard the result of the application; for I dread to think of the uneasiness which such an affair would occasion the amiable Mrs. Mirvan. But, fortunately, Madame Duval has received very little encouragement to proceed in her design, for she has been informed that, as she neither heard the voice nor saw the face of the person suspected, she will find it difficult to cast him upon *conjecture*, and will have but little probability of gaining her cause, unless she can procure witnesses of the transaction. Mr. Branghton, therefore, who has considered all the circumstances of the affair, is of opinion, that the lawsuit will not only be expensive, but tedious and hazardous, and has advised against it. Madame Duval, though very unwillingly, has acquiesced in his decision; but vows that if ever she is so affronted again, she will be revenged, even if she ruins herself. I am extremely glad that this ridiculous adventure seems now likely to end without more serious consequences.

Adieu, my dearest Sir! My direction is at Mr. Dawkins's, a hosier in High Holborn.

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LETTER X.

EVELINA TO MISS MIRVAN.

June 7th.

I HAVE no words, my sweet friend! to express the thankfulness I feel for the unbounded kindness which you, your dear mother, and the much-honored Lady Howard, have shown me; and still less can I find language to tell you with what reluctance I parted from such dear and generous friends, whose goodness reflects, at once, so much honor on their own hearts, and on her to whom it has been so liberally bestowed. But I will not repeat what I have already written to the kind Mrs. Mirvan; I will remember your admonitions, and confine to my own breast that gratitude with which you have filled it, and teach my pen to dwell upon subjects less painful to my generous correspondent.

Oh, Maria! London now seems no longer the same place where I lately enjoyed so much happiness; every thing is new and strange to me; even the town itself has not the same aspect:—

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my situation so altered!—my home so different!—my companions so changed!—But you well know my averseness to this journey.

Indeed, to me, London now seems a desert; that gay and busy appearance it so lately wore is now succeeded by a look of gloom, fatigue, and lassitude; the air seems stagnant, the heat is intense, the dust intolerable, and the inhabitants illiterate and under-bred: at least, such is the face of things in the part of the town where I at present reside.

Tell me, my dear Maria! do you never retrace in your memory the time we passed here when together?—to mine, it recurs for ever! and yet, I think I rather recollect a dream, or some visionary fancy, than a reality.—That I should ever have been known to Lord Orville,—that I should have spoken to—have danced with him,—seems now a romantic illusion: and that elegant politeness, that flattering attention, that high-bred delicacy, which so much distinguished him above all other men, and which struck us with such admiration, I now retrace the remembrance of, rather as belonging to an object of ideal perfection, formed by my own imagination, than to a being of the same race and nature as those with whom I at present converse.

I have no news for you, my dear Miss Mirvan; for all that I could venture to say of Ma-

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dame Duval, I have already written to your sweet mother; and as to adventures, I have none to record. Situated as I now am, I heartily hope I shall not meet with any; my wish is to remain quiet and unnoticed.

Adieu! excuse the gravity of this letter, and believe me,

Your most sincerely

affectionate and obliged

EVELINA ANVILLE.

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LETTER XI.

VELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Holborn, June 9.

YESTERDAY morning, we received an invitation to dine and spend the day at Mr. Branghton's; and M. Du Bois, who was also invited, called to conduct us to Snow-hill.

Young Branghton received us at the door, and the first words he spoke were, "Do you know, sisters a'n't dressed yet?"

Then hurrying us into the house, he said to me, "Come, Miss! you shall go up stairs and catch 'em, — I dare say they're at the glass."

He would have taken my hand, but I declined this civility, and begged to follow Madame Duval. Mr. Branghton then appeared, and led the way himself. We went, as before, up two pair of stairs; but the moment the father opened the door, the daughters both gave a loud scream. We all stopped, and then Miss Branghton called out, "Lord, papa, what do you bring the com-

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pany up here for? why, Polly and I a'n't half dressed."

"More shame for you," answered he; "here's your aunt, and cousin, and M. Du Bois, all waiting, and ne'er a room to take them to."

"Who'd have thought of their coming so soon?" cried she: "I'm sure, for my part, I thought Miss was used to nothing but quality hours."

"Why, I sha'n't be ready this half-hour yet," said Miss Polly; "can't they stay in the shop, till we're dressed?"

Mr. Branghton was very angry, and scolded them violently; however, we were obliged to descend, and stools were procured for us in the shop, where we found the brother, who was highly delighted, he said, that his sisters had been *catched;* and he thought proper to entertain me with a long account of their tediousness, and the many quarrels they all had together.

When, at length, these ladies were equipped to their satisfaction, they made their appearance; but before any conversation was suffered to pass between them and us, they had a long and most disagreeable dialogue with their father; to whose reprimands, though so justly incurred, they replied with the utmost pertness and rudeness; while their brother, all the time, laughed aloud.

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The moment they perceived this, they were so much provoked, that, instead of making any apologies to Madame Duval, they next began a quarrel with him. "Tom, what do you laugh for? I wonder what business you have to be always a laughing when papa scolds us."

"Then what business have you to be such a while getting on your clothes? You're never ready, you know well enough."

"Lord, Sir! I wonder what's that to you! I wish you'd mind your own affairs, and not trouble yourself about ours. How should a boy like you know any thing?"

"A boy, indeed! not such a boy, neither; I'll warrant you'll be glad to be as young, when you come to be old maids."

This sort of dialogue we were amused with till dinner was ready, when we again mounted up two pair of stairs.

In our way, Miss Polly told me that her sister had asked Mr. Smith for his room to dine in, but he had refused to lend it; "because," she said, "one day it happened to be a little greased: however, we shall have it to drink tea in, and then, perhaps, you may see him; and I assure you he's quite like one of the quality, and dresses as fine, and goes to balls and dances, and every thing quite in taste;—and besides, Miss, he keeps a footboy of his own, too."

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The dinner was ill-served, ill-cooked, and ill-managed. The maid who waited had so often to go down stairs for something that was forgotten, that the Branghton's were perpetually obliged to rise from table themselves, to get plates, knives and forks, bread or beer. Had they been without *pretensions*, all this would have seemed of no consequence; but they aimed at appearing to advantage, and even fancied they succeeded: however, the most disagreeable part of our fare was, that the whole family continually disputed whose turn it was to rise, and whose to be allowed to sit still.

When this meal was over, Madame Duval, ever eager to discourse upon *her travels*, entered into an argument with Mr. Branghton, and, in broken English, M. Du Bois, concerning the French nation: and Miss Polly, then addressing herself to me, said, "Don't you think, Miss, it's very dull sitting up stairs here! we'd better go down *to shop*, and then we shall see the people go by."

"Lord, Poll!" said the brother, "you're always wanting to be staring and gaping; and I'm sure you needn't be so fond of showing yourself; for you're ugly enough to frighten a horse."

"Ugly, indeed! I wonder which is best, you or me. But, I tell you what, Tom, you've

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no need to give yourself such airs; for if you do, I'll tell Miss of you know what—."

"Who cares if you do? you may tell what you will; I don't mind—"

"Indeed," cried I, "I do not desire to hear any secrets."

"Oh, but I'm resolved I'll tell you, because Tom's so very spiteful. You must know, Miss, t'other night—"

"Poll," cried the brother, "if you tell of that, Miss shall know all about your meeting young Brown,—you know when!—So I'll be quits with you, one way or another."

Miss Polly colored, and again proposed our going down stairs till Mr. Smith's room was ready for our reception.

"Aye, so we will!" said Miss Braughton; "I'll assure you, cousin, we have some very genteel people pass by our shop sometimes. Polly and I always go and sit there, when we've cleaned ourselves."

"Yes, Miss!" cried the brother, "they do nothing else all day long, when father don't scold them. But the best fun is, when they've got all their dirty things on, and all their hair about their ears, sometimes I send young Brown up stairs to them; and then, there's such a fuss!—there they hide themselves, and run away, and squeel and squall like any thing mad: and so then

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I puts the two cats into the room, and I gives 'em a good whipping, and so that sets them a squalling too; so there's such a noise, and such an uproar! — Lord, you can't think, Miss, what fun it is!"

This occasioned a fresh quarrel with the sisters; at the end of which it was at length decided that we should go to the shop.

In our way down stairs, Miss Branghton said aloud, "I wonder when Mr. Smith's room will be ready."

"So do I," answered Polly; "I'm sure we should not do any harm to it now."

This hint had not the desired effect; for we were suffered to proceed very quietly.

As we entered the shop, I observed a young man, in deep mourning, leaning against the wall, with his arms folded and his eyes fixed on the ground, apparently in profound and melancholy meditation: but the moment he perceived us, he started, and, making a passing bow, very abruptly retired. As I found he was permitted to go quite unnoticed, I could not forbear inquiring who he was.

"Lord!" answered Miss Branghton, "he's nothing but a poor Scotch poet."

"For my part," said Miss Polly, "I believe he's just starved, for I don't find he has any thing to live upon."

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"Live upon!" cried the brother, "why he's a poet, you know; so he may live upon learning."

"Aye, and good enough for him too!" said Miss Branghton; "for he's as proud as he's poor."

"Like enough," replied the brother; "but, for all that, you won't find he will live without meat and drink: no, no, catch a scotchman at that if you can! why, they only come here for what they can get."

"I'm sure," said Miss Branghton, "I wonder papa'll be such a fool as to let him stay in the house; for I dare say he'll never pay for his lodging."

"Why, no more he would, if he could get another lodger: you know the bill's been put up this fortnight. Miss, if you should hear of a person that wants a room, I assure you it is a very good one, for all it's up three pair of stairs."

I answered, that, as I had no acquaintance in London, I had not any chance of assisting them: but both my compassion and my curiosity were excited for this poor young man; and I asked them some further particulars concerning him.

They then acquainted me, that they had only known him three months. When he first lodged with them, he agreed to board also; but, had

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lately told them he would eat by himself, though they all believed he had hardly ever tasted a morsel of meat since he left their table. They said, that he had always appeared very low-spirited, but, for the last month, he had been *duller* than ever, and, all of a sudden, had put himself into mourning; though they knew not for whom nor for what, but they supposed it was only for convenience, as no person had ever been to see or inquire for him since his residence amongst them; and they were sure he was very poor, as he had not paid for his lodgings the last three weeks: and finally, they concluded he was a poet, or else half-crazy; because they had, at different times, found scraps of poetry in his room.

They then produced some unfinished verses, written on small pieces of paper, unconnected, and of a most melancholy cast. Among them was the fragment of an ode, which, at my request, they lent me to copy; and, as you may perhaps like to see it, I will write it now.

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O Life! thou lingering dream of grief, of pain,
And every ill that Nature can sustain,
Strange, mutable, and wild!
Now flattering with Hope most fair,
Depressing now with fell Despair;
The nurse of Guilt, the slave of Pride;
That, like a wayward child,
Who, to himself a foe,
Sees joy alone in what's deny'd,—
In what is granted, woe!

Oh thou, poor, feeble, fleeting pow'r!
By Vice sedue'd, by Folly woo'd,
By Mis'ry, Shame, Remorse, pursu'd;
And, as thy toilsome steps proceed,
Seeming to Youth the fairest flow'r,
Proving to Age the rankest weed,—
A gilded, but a bitter pill,
Of varied, great, and complicated ill!

These lines are harsh, but they indicate an internal wretchedness which, I own, affects me. Surely this young man must be involved in misfortunes of no common nature: but I cannot imagine what can induce him to remain with this unfeeling family, where he is most unworthily despised for being poor, and most illiberally detested for being a Scotchman. He may, indeed, have motives, which he cannot surmount,

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for submitting to such a situation: whatever they are, I most heartily pity him, and cannot but wish it were in my power to afford him some relief.

During this conversation, Mr. Smith's footboy came to Miss Branghton, and informed her that his master said she might have the room now when she liked it, for that he was presently going out.

This very genteel message, though it perfectly satisfied the Miss Branghtons, by no means added to my desire of being introduced to this gentleman: and upon their rising with intention to accept his offer, I begged they would excuse my attending them, and said I would sit with Madame Duval till the tea was ready.

I therefore once more went up two pair of stairs with young Branghton, who insisted upon accompanying me; and there we remained, till Mr. Smith's footboy summoned us to tea, when I followed Madame Duval into the dining-room.

The Miss Branghtons were seated at one window, and Mr. Smith was lolling indolently out of the other. They all approached us at our entrance, and Mr. Smith, probably to show he was master of the apartment, most officiously handed me to a great chair at the upper end of the room, without taking any notice of

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Madame Duval, till I rose and offered her my own seat.

Leaving the rest of the company to entertain themselves, he, very abruptly, began to address himself to me, in a style of gallantry equally new and disagreeable to me. It is true, no man can possibly pay me greater compliments, or make more fine speeches, than Sir Clement Willoughby; yet his language, though too flowery, is always that of gentleman, and his address and manners are so very superior to those of the inhabitants of this house, that to make any comparison between him and Mr. Smith would be extremely unjust. This latter seems very desirous of appearing a man of gaiety and spirit; but his vivacity is so low-bred, and his whole behaviour so forward and disagreeable, that I should prefer the company of *dulness* itself, even as that goddess is described by Pope, to that of this *sprightly* young man.

He made many apologies that he had not left his room for our dinner, which, he said, he should certainly have done, had he seen me first; and he assured me, that when I came again, he should be very glad to oblige me.

I told him, and with sincerity, that every part of the house was equally indifferent to me.

"Why, Ma'am, the truth is, Miss Biddy and Polly take no care of any thing; else, I'm sure,

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they should be always welcome to my room; for I'm never so happy as in obliging the ladies, —that's my character, Ma'am;—but, really, the last time they had it, every thing was made so greasy and so nasty, that, upon my word, to a man who wishes to have things a little genteel, it was quite cruel. Now, as to you, Ma'am, it's quite another thing; for I should not mind if every thing I had was spoilt, for the sake of having the pleasure to oblige you; and, I assure you, Ma'am, it makes me quite happy that I have a room good enough to receive you."

This elegant speech was followed by many others, so much in the same style, that to write them would be superfluous; and, as he did not allow me a moment to speak to any other person, the rest of the evening was consumed in a painful attention to this irksome young man, who seemed to intend appearing before me to the utmost advantage.

Adieu, my dear Sir! I fear you will be sick of reading about this family: yet I must write of them, or not of any, since I mix with no other. Happy shall I be when I quit them all, and again return to Berry Hill!

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LETTER XII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

June 10th.

THIS morning, Mr. Smith called, *on purpose*, he said, to offer me a ticket for the next Hampstead assembly. I thanked him, but desired to be excused accepting it; he would not, however, be denied, nor answered; and, in a manner both vehement and free, pressed and urged his offer till I was wearied to death: but, when he found me resolute, he seemed thunderstruck with amazement, and thought proper to desire I would tell him my reasons.

Obvious as they must, surely, have been to any other person, they were such as I knew not how to repeat to him; and, when he found I hesitated, he said, "Indeed, Ma'am! you are too modest; I assure you the ticket is quite at your service, and I shall be very happy to dance with you; so pray don't be so coy."

"Indeed, Sir!" returned I, "you are mistaken; I never supposed you would offer a ticket,

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without wishing it should be accepted; but it would answer no purpose to mention the reasons which make me decline it, since they cannot possibly be removed."

This speech seemed very much to mortify him, which I could not be concerned at, as I did not choose to be treated by him with so much freedom. When he was, at last, convinced that his application to me was ineffectual, he addressed himself to Madame Duval, and begged she would interfere in his favor, offering, at the same time, to procure another ticket for herself.

"*Ma foi*, Sir;" answered she, angrily, "you might as well have had the complaisance to ask me before; for, I assure you, I don't approve of no such rudeness: however, you may keep your tickets to yourself, for we don't want none of 'em."

This rebuke almost overset him; he made many apologies, and said that he should certainly have first applied to her, but that he had no notion the *young* lady would have refused him; and, on the contrary, had concluded that she would have assisted him to persuade Madame Duval herself.

This excuse appeased her; and he pleaded his cause so successfully, that, to my great chagrin, he gained it; and Madame Duval promised

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that she would go herself, and take me to the Hampstead assembly whenever he pleased.

Mr. Smith then, approaching me with an air of triumph, said, "Well, Ma'am, now, I think, you can't possibly keep to your denial."

I made no answer, and he soon took leave; though not till he had so wonderfully gained the favor of Madame Duval, that she declared, when he was gone, he was the prettiest young man she had seen since she came to England.

As soon as I could find an opportunity, I ventured, in the most humble manner, to intreat Madame Duval would not insist upon my attending her to this ball; and represented to her, as well as I was able, the impropriety of my accepting any present from a young man so entirely unknown to me: but she laughed at my scruples; called me a foolish, ignorant country girl; and said she should make it her business to teach me something of the world.

This ball is to be next week. I am sure it is not more improper for than unpleasant to me, and I will use every possible endeavour to avoid it. Perhaps I may apply to Miss Branghton for advice; as I believe she will be willing to assist me, from disliking, equally with myself, that I should dance with Mr. Smith.

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July 11th.

Oh, my dear Sir! I have been shocked to death; —and yet, at the same time, delighted beyond expression, in the hope that I have happily been the instrument of saving a human creature from destruction!

This morning, Madame Duval said she would invite the Branghton family to return our visit to-morrow; and, not choosing to rise herself, —for she generally spends the morning in bed, —she desired me to wait upon them with her message. M. Du Bois, who just then called, insisted upon attending me.

Mr. Branghton was in the shop, and told us that his son and daughters were out; but desired me to step up stairs, as he very soon expected them home. This I did, leaving M. Du Bois below. I went into the room where we had dined the day before, and, by a wonderful chance, I happened so to seat myself, that I had a view of the stairs, and yet could not be seen from them.

In about ten minutes time, I saw, passing by the door, with a look perturbed and affrighted, the same young man I mentioned in my last letter. Not heeding, as I suppose, how he went, in turning the corner of the stairs, which are

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narrow and winding, his foot slipped, and he fell, but almost instantly rising, I plainly perceived the end of a pistol, which started from his pocket by hitting against the stairs.

I was inexpressibly shocked. All that I had heard of his misery occurring to my memory, made me conclude that he was at that very moment meditating suicide! Struck with the dreadful idea, all my strength seemed to fail me. He moved on slowly, yet I soon lost sight of him; I sat motionless with terror; all power of action forsook me; and I grew almost stiff with horror: till recollecting that it was yet possible to prevent the fatal deed, all my faculties seemed to return with the hope of saving him.

My first thought was to fly to Mr. Branghton, but I feared that an instant of time lost might for ever be rued; and, therefore, guided by the impulse of my apprehensions, as well as I was able I followed him up stairs, stepping very softly, and obliged to support myself by the banisters.

When I came within a few stairs of the landing-place, I stopped, for I could then see into his room, as he had not yet shut the door.

He had put the pistol upon a table, and had his hand in his pocket, whence, in a few moments, he took out another: he then emptied something on the table from a small leather bag;

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after which, taking up both the pistols, one in each hand, he dropped hastily upon his knees, and called out, " O God!—forgive me!"

In a moment, strength and courage seemed lent me as by inspiration: I started, and rushing precipitately into the room, just caught his arm, and then, overcome by my own fears, I fell down at his side, breathless and senseless. My recovery, however, was, I believe, almost instantaneous; and then the sight of this unhappy man, regarding me with a look of unutterable astonishment, mixed with concern, presently restored to me my recollection. I arose, though with difficulty; he did the same; the pistols, as I soon saw, were both on the floor.

Unwilling to leave them, and, indeed, too weak to move, I leaned one hand on the table, and then stood perfectly still: while he, his eyes cast wildly towards me, seemed too infinitely amazed to be capable of either speech or action.

I believe we were some minutes in this extraordinary situation; but as my strength returned, I felt myself both ashamed and awkward, and moved towards the door. Pale and motionless, he suffered me to pass, without changing his posture or uttering a syllable; and, indeed,

He look'd a bloodless image of despair!

POPE'S ILIADS.

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When I reached the door, I turned round; I looked fearfully at the pistols, and, impelled by an emotion I could not repress, I hastily stepped back, with an intention of carrying them away: but their wretched owner, perceiving my design, and recovering from his astonishment, darting suddenly down, seized them both himself.

Wild with fright, and scarce knowing what I did, I caught, almost involuntarily, hold of both his arms, and exclaimed, "Oh, Sir! have mercy on yourself!"

The guilty pistols fell from his hands, which, disengaging from me, he fervently clasped, and cried, "Sweet heaven! is this thy angel?"

Encouraged by such gentleness, I again attempted to take the pistols, but, with a look half frantic, he again prevented me, saying, "What would you do?"

"Awaken you," I cried, with a courage I now wonder at, "to worthier thoughts, and rescue you from perdition."

I then seized the pistols; he said not a word, —he made no effort to stop me;—I glided quick by him, and tottered down stairs, ere he had recovered from the extremest amazement.

The moment I reached again the room I had so fearfully left, I threw away the pistols, and flinging myself on the first chair, gave free vent to the feelings I had most painfully stifled

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in a violent burst of tears, which, indeed, proved a happy relief to me.

In this situation I remained some time; but when, at length, I lifted up my head, the first object I saw was the poor man who had occasioned my terror standing as if petrified at the door, and gazing at me with eyes of wild wonder.

I started from the chair, but trembled so excessively, that I almost instantly sunk again into it. He then, though without advancing, and in a faltering voice, said, "Whoever, or whatever you are, relieve me, I pray you, from the suspense under which my soul labors—and tell me if indeed I do not dream!"

To this address, so singular and so solemn, I had not then the presence of mind to frame any answer: but, as I presently perceived that his eyes turned from me to the pistols, and that he seemed to intend regaining them, I exerted all my strength, and saying, "Oh, for heaven's sake, forbear!" I rose and took them myself.

"Do my senses deceive me!" cried he, "do *I* live—? and do *you?*"

As he spoke, he advanced towards me; and I still guarding the pistols, retreated, saying, "No, no—you must not—must not have them!"—

"Why—for what purpose, tell me!—do you withhold them?"—

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"To give you time to *think*,—to save you from eternal misery,—and, I hope, to reserve you for mercy and forgiveness."

"Wonderful!" cried he, with uplifted hands and eyes, "most wonderful!"

For some time, he seemed wrapped in deep thought, till a sudden noise of tongues below announcing the approach of the Branghtons, made him start from his reverie: he sprung hastily forward,—dropped on one knee,—caught hold of my gown, which he pressed to his lips; and then, quick as lightning, he rose, and flew up stairs to his own room.

There was something, in the whole of this extraordinary and shocking adventure, really too affecting to be borne; and so entirely had I spent my spirits and exhausted my courage, that, before the Branghtons reached me, I had sunk on the ground without sense or motion.

I believe I must have been a very horrid sight to them, on their entrance into the room; for, to all appearance, I seemed to have suffered a violent death, either by my own rashness or the cruelty of some murderer; as the pistols had fallen close by my side.

How soon I recovered, I know not; but probably I was more indebted to the loudness of their cries, than to their assistance; for they all

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concluded that I was dead, and, for some time, did not make any effort to revive me.

Scarcely could I recollect *where*, or, indeed *what* I was, ere they poured upon me such a torrent of questions and inquiries, that I was almost stunned with their vociferation. However, as soon and as well as I was able, I endeavoured to satisfy their curiosity, by recounting what had happened as clearly as was in my power. They all looked aghast at the recital; but, not being well enough to enter into any discussions, I begged to have a chair called, and to return instantly home.

Before I left them, I recommended with great earnestness a vigilant observance of their unhappy lodger; and that they would take care to keep from him, if possible, all means of self-destruction.

M. Du Bois, who seemed extremely concerned at my indisposition, walked by the side of the chair, and saw me safe to my own apartment.

The rashness and the misery of this illfated young man engross all my thoughts. If, indeed, he is bent upon destroying himself, all efforts to save him will be fruitless. How much do I wish it were in my power to discover the nature of the malady which thus maddens him, and to offer or to procure alleviation to his sufferings! I am sure, my dearest Sir, you will

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be much concerned for this poor man; and were you here, I doubt not but you would find some method of awakening him from the error which blinds him, and of pouring the balm of peace and comfort into his afflicted soul.

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LETTER XIII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Holborn, June 13th.

YESTERDAY all the Branghtons dined here.

Our conversation was almost wholly concerning the adventure of the day before. Mr. Branghton said, that his first thought was instantly to turn his lodger out of doors, "lest," continued he, "his killing himself in my house should bring me into any trouble; but then, I was afraid I should never get the money he owes me; whereas, if he dies in my house, I have a right to all he leaves behind him, if he goes off in my debt. Indeed, I would put him in prison,—but what should I get by that? he could not earn any thing there to pay me. So I considered about it some time, and then I determined to ask him, point-blank, for my money out of hand. And so I did, but he told me he'd pay me next week: however, I gave him to understand, that, though I was no Scotchman, yet I did not like to be

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overreached any more than he; so then he gave me a ring, which, to my certain knowledge, must be worth ten guineas, and told me he would not part with it for his life, and a good deal more such sort of stuff, but that I might keep it till he could pay me."

"It is ten to one, father," said young Branghton, "if he came fairly by it."

"Very likely not," answered he, "but that will make no great difference; for I shall be able to prove my right to it all the same."

What principles!—I could hardly stay in the room.

"I'm determined," said the son, "I'll take some opportunity to affront him soon, now I know how poor he is; because of the airs he gave himself to me when he first came."

"And pray how was that, child?" said Madame Duval.

"Why, you never knew such a fuss in your life as he made, because, one day at dinner, I only happened to say, that I supposed he had never got such a good meal in his life, before he came to England: there he fell in such a passion as you can't think; but, for my part, I took no notice of it; for to be sure, thinks I, he must needs be a gentleman, or he'd never go to be so angry about it. However, he won't put his tricks upon me again, in a hurry."

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"Well," said Miss Polly, "he's grown quite another creature to what he was, and he does n't run away from us, nor hide himself, nor any thing; and he's as civil as can be, and he's always in the shop, and he saunters about the stairs, and he looks at every body as comes in."

"Why, you may see what he's after, plain enough," said Mr. Branghton; "he wants to see Miss again."

"Ha, ha, ha! Lord, how I should laugh," said the son, "if he should have fell in love with Miss!"

"I'm sure," said Miss Branghton, "Miss is welcome; but, for my part, I should be quite ashamed of such a beggarly conquest."

Such was the conversation till tea-time, when the appearance of Mr. Smith gave a new turn to the discourse.

Miss Branghton desired me to remark with what a *smart air* he entered the room, and asked me if he had not very much a *quality look?*"

"Come!" cried he, advancing to us, "you ladies must not sit together; wherever I go, I always make it a rule to part the ladies."

And then, handing Miss Branghton to the next chair, he seated himself between us.

"Well, now, ladies! I think we sit very well.

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What say you? for my part, I think it was a very good motion."

"If my cousin likes it," said Miss Branghton, "I'm sure I've no objection."

"Oh!" cried he, "I always study what the ladies like,—that's my first thought. And, indeed, it is but natural that you should like best to sit by the gentlemen, for what can you find to say to one another?"

"Say?" cried young Branghton, "Oh, never you think of that! they'll find enough to say, I'll be sworn. You know the women are never tired of talking."

"Come, come, Tom!" said Mr. Smith, "don't be severe upon the ladies, when I'm by; you know I always take their part."

Soon after, when Miss Branghton offered me some cake, this man of gallantry said, "Well, if I was that lady, I'd never take any thing from a woman."

"Why not, Sir?"

"Because I should be afraid of being poisoned for being so handsome."

"Who is severe upon the ladies *now*?" said I.

"Why, really, Ma'am, it was a slip of the tongue; I did not intend to say such a thing; but one can't always be on one's guard."

Soon after, the conversation turning upon

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public places, young Branghton asked if I had ever been to *George's* at Hampstead?"

"Indeed I never heard the place mentioned."

"Didn't you, Miss?" cried he eagerly; "why then you've a deal of fun to come, I'll promise you; and, I tell you what, I'll treat you there some Sunday soon. So now, Bid and Polly, be sure you don't tell Miss about the chairs, and all that, for I've a mind to surprise her; and if I pay, I think I've a right to have it my own way."

"George's at Hampstead!" repeated Mr. Smith, contemptuously, "how came you to think the young lady would like to go to such a low place as that? But, pray, Ma'am! have you ever been to Don Saltero's at Chelsea?"

"No, Sir."

"No!—nay, then, I must insist on having the pleasure of conducting you there before long. I assure you, Ma'am, many genteel people go; or else, I give you my word, *I* should not recommend it."

"Pray, cousin," said Mr. Branghton, "have you been at Sadler's Wells yet?"

"No, Sir."

"No! why then you've seen nothing!"

"Pray, Miss," said the son, "how do you like the Tower of London?"

"I have never been to it, Sir."

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"Goodness!" exclaimed he, "not seen the Tower!—why, maybe, you ha'n't been o' top of the Monument, neither?"

"No, indeed, I have not."

"Why, then, you might as well not have come to London, for aught I see; for you've been no where."

"Pray, Miss," said Polly, "have you been all over Paul's Church, yet?"

"No, Ma'am."

"Well, but, Ma'am!" said Mr. Smith, "how do you like Vauxhall and Marybone?"

"I never saw either, Sir."

"No? God bless me!—you really surprise me!—why Vauxhall is the first pleasure in life!—I know nothing like it.—Well, Ma'am, you must have been with strange people, indeed, not to have taken you to Vauxhall. Why you have seen nothing of London yet.—However, we must try if *we* can't make you amends."

In the course of this *catechism*, many other places were mentioned, of which I have forgotten the names; but the looks of surprise and contempt that my repeated negatives incurred, were very diverting.

"Come," said Mr. Smith, after tea, "as this lady has been with such a queer set of people, let's show her the difference; suppose we go somewhere to-night!—I love to do things with

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spirit! — Come, ladies, where shall we go? For my part, I should like Foote's,—but the ladies must choose; I never speak myself,"

"Well, Mr. Smith is always in such spirits!" said Miss Branghton.

"Why, yes, Ma'am! yes, thank God! pretty good spirits; — I have not yet the cares of the world upon me, — I am not *married*, — ha, ha, ha! — you'll excuse me, ladies, — but I can't help laughing!—"

No objection being made, to my great relief, we all proceeded to the little theatre in the Haymarket, where I was extremely entertained by the performance of the Minor and the Commissary.

They all returned hither to supper.

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LETTER XIV.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

June 15th.

YESTERDAY morning, Madame Duval again sent me to Mr. Branghton's, attended by M. Du Bois, to make some party for the evening; because she had had the vapors the preceding day, from staying at home.

As I entered the shop, I perceived the unfortunate North Briton seated in a corner, with a book in his hand. He cast his melancholy eyes up as we came in, and, I believe, immediately recollected my face, for he started and changed color. I delivered Madame Duval's message to Mr. Branghton; who told me I should find Polly up stairs, but that the others were gone out.

Up stairs, therefore, I went; and seated on a window, with Mr. Brown at her side, sat Miss Polly. I felt a little awkward at disturbing them, and much more so at their behaviour afterwards; for, as soon as the common in-

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quiries were over, Mr. Brown grew so fond and so foolish, that I was extremely disgusted. Polly, all the time, only rebuked him with, "La, now, Mr. Brown! do be quiet, can't you?—you should not behave so before company.—Why, now, what will Miss think of me?"—while her looks plainly showed not merely the pleasure but the pride which she took in his caresses.

I did not, by any means, think it necessary to punish myself by witnessing their tenderness; and, therefore, telling them I would see if Miss Branghton were returned home, I soon left them, and again descended into the shop.

"So, Miss, you've come again," said Mr. Branghton; "what, I suppose, you've a mind to sit a little in the shop, and see how the world goes; hay, Miss?"

I made no answer; and M. Du Bois instantly brought me a chair.

The unhappy stranger, who had risen at my entrance, again seated himself; and, though his head leaned towards his book, I could not help observing that his eyes were most intently and earnestly turned towards me.

M. Du Bois, as well as his broken English would allow him, endeavoured to entertain us, till the return of Miss Branghton and her brother.

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"Lord, how tired I am!" cried the former, "I have not a foot to stand upon." And then, without any ceremony, she flung herself into the chair from which I had risen to receive her.

"You tired!" said the brother, "why, then, what must I be, that have walked twice as far?" And, with equal politeness, he paid the same compliment to M. Du Bois which his sister had done to me.

Two chairs and three stools completed the furniture of the shop, and Mr. Branghton, who chose to keep his own seat himself, desired M. Du Bois to take another; and then, seeing that I was without any, called out to the stranger, "Come, Mr. Macartney! lend us your stool."

Shocked at their rudeness, I declined the offer, and approaching Miss Branghton, said, "If you will be so good as to make room for me on your chair, there will be no occasion to disturb that gentleman."

"Lord! what signifies that?" cried the brother, "he has had his share of sitting, I'll be sworn."

"And if he has not," said the sister, "he has a chair up stairs; and the shop is our own, I hope."

This grossness so much disgusted me, that

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I took the stool, and, carrying it back to Mr. Macartney myself, I returned him thanks as civilly as I could for his politeness, but said that I had rather stand.

He looked at me as if unaccustomed to such attention, bowed very respectfully, but neither spoke nor yet made use of it.

I soon found that I was an object of derision to all present, except M. Du Bois; and, therefore, I begged Mr. Branghton would give me an answer for Madame Duval, as I was in haste to return.

"Well, then! Tom,—Biddy,—where have you a mind to go to-night? your aunt and Miss want to be abroad and amongst them."

"Why then, papa," said Miss Branghton, we'll go to Don Saltero's. Mr. Smith likes that place, so maybe he'll go along with us."

"No, no!" said the son, "I'm for White-Conduit House; so let's go there."

"White-Conduit House, indeed!" cried his sister, "no, Tom, that I won't."

"Why, then, let it alone; nobody wants your company;—we shall do as well without you, I'll be sworn, and better too."

"I'll tell you what, Tom; if you don't hold your tongue, I'll make you repent it,—that I assure you."

Just then, Mr. Smith came into the shop,

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which he seemed to intend passing through; but when he saw me he stopped, and began a most courteous inquiry after my health; protesting that, had he known I was there, he should have come down sooner. "But, bless me, Ma'am!" added he, "what is the reason you stand?" and then he flew to bring me the seat from which I had just parted.

"Mr. Smith, you are come in very good time," said Mr. Branghton, "to end a dispute between my son and daughter, about where they shall all go to-night."

"Oh, fie, Tom,—dispute with a lady!" cried Mr. Smith. "Now, as for me, I'm for where you will, provided this young lady is of the party,—one place is the same as another to me, so that it be but agreeable to the ladies:—I would go any where with you, Ma'am," to me, "unless, indeed, it were to *church*;—ha, ha, ha!—you'll excuse me, Ma'am, but, really, I never could conquer my fear of a parson;—ha, ha, ha!—really, ladies, I beg your pardon for being so rude, but I can't help laughing for my life!"

"I was just saying, Mr. Smith," said Miss Branghton, "that I should like to go to Don Saltero's;—now pray where should *you* like to go?"

"Why, really, Miss Biddy, you know I always let the ladies decide; I never fix any thing

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myself; but I should suppose it would be rather hot at the coffee-house: however, pray, ladies! settle it among yourselves,—I'm agreeable to whatever you choose."

It was easy for me to discover that this man, with all his parade of *conformity*, objects to every thing that is not proposed by himself: but he is so much admired by this family for his *gentility*, that he thinks himself a complete fine gentleman!

"Come," said Mr. Branghton, "the best way will be to put it to the vote, and then every body will speak their minds. Biddy, call Poll down stairs. We'll start fair."

"Lord, papa!" said Miss Branghton, "why can't you as well send Tom?—you're always sending me of the errands."

A dispute then ensued, but Miss Branghton was obliged to yield.

When Mr. Brown and Miss Polly made their appearance, the latter uttered many complaints of having been called, saying she did not want to come, and was very well where she was.

"Now, ladies, your votes," cried Mr. Smith; "and so, Ma'am," to me, "we'll begin with you. What place shall you like best?" and then, in a whisper, he added, "I assure you, I shall say the same as you do, whether I like it or not."

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I said, that as I was ignorant what choice was in my power, I must beg to hear their decisions first. This was reluctantly assented to; and then Miss Branghton voted for Saltero's Coffeehouse; her sister, for a party to *Mother Red Cap's*; the brother, for White-Conduit House; Mr. Brown, for Bagnigge Wells; Mr. Branghton for Sadler's Wells; and Mr. Smith for Vauxhall.

"Well, now, Ma'am!" said Mr. Smith, "we have all spoken, and so you must give the casting vote. Come! what will you fix upon?"

"Sir," answered I, "I was to speak *last*."

"Well, so you will," said Miss Branghton, "for we've all spoke first."

"Pardon me," returned I, "the voting has not yet been quite general."

And I looked towards Mr. Macartney, to whom I wished extremely to show that I was not of the same brutal nature with those by whom he was treated so grossly.

"Why, pray," said Mr. Branghton, "who have we left out? would you have the cats and dogs vote?"

"No, Sir!" cried I, with some spirit, "I would have *that gentleman* vote,—if, indeed, he is not superior to joining our party."

They all looked at me, as if they doubted whether or not they had heard me right: but

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in a few moments, their surprise gave way to a rude burst of laughter.

Very much displeased, I told M. Du Bois that if he was not ready to go, I would have a coach called for myself.

"O yes!" he said, he was always ready to attend me.

Mr. Smith, then advancing, attempted to take my hand, and begged me not to leave them till I had settled the evening's plan.

"I have nothing, Sir!" said I, "to do with it, as it is my intention to stay at home; and therefore Mr. Branghton will be so good as to send Madame Duval word what place is fixed upon, when it is convenient to him."

And then making a slight curtsey, I left them.

How much does my disgust for these people increase my pity for poor Mr. Macartney! I will not see them when I can avoid so doing; but I am determined to take every opportunity in my power to show civility to this unhappy man, whose misfortunes, with this family, only render him an object of scorn: I was, however, very well pleased with M. Du Bois; who, far from joining in their mirth, expressed himself extremely shocked at their illbreeding.

We had not walked ten yards before we were followed by Mr. Smith, who came to make ex-

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cuses, and to assure me they were *only joking*, and hoped I took nothing ill; for, if I did, he would make a quarrel of it himself with the Branghtons, rather than I should receive any offence.

I begged him not to take any trouble about so immaterial an affair, and assured him I should not myself. He was so officious, that he would not be prevailed upon to return home till he had walked with us to Mr. Dawkins's.

Madame Duval was very much displeased that I brought her so little satisfaction. White-Conduit House was, at last, fixed upon; and, notwithstanding my great dislike of such parties and such places, I was obliged to accompany them.

Very disagreeable, and much according to my expectations, the evening proved. There were many people all smart and gaudy, and so pert and low-bred, that I could hardly endure being amongst them; but the party to which, unfortunately, I belonged, seemed all *at home*.

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LETTER XV.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Holborn, June 17th.

YESTERDAY Mr. Smith carried his point of making a party for Vauxhall, consisting of Madame Duval, M. Du Bois, all the Branghtons, Mr. Brown, himself,—and me!—for I find all endeavours vain to escape any thing which these people desire I should not.

There were twenty disputes previous to our setting out; first, as to the *time* of our going: Mr. Branghton, his son, and young Brown, were for six o'clock; and all the ladies and Mr. Smith were for eight;—the latter, however, conquered.

Then, as to the *way* we should go; some were for a boat, others for a coach, and Mr. Branghton himself was for walking: but the boat, at length, was decided upon. Indeed this was the only part of the expedition that was agreeable to me; for the Thames was delightfully pleasant.

The garden is very pretty, but too formal; I

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should have been better pleased, had it consisted less of straight walks, where

Grove nods at grove, each alley has its brother.

The trees, the numerous lights, and the company in the circle round the orchestra, make a most brilliant and gay appearance; and, had I been with a party less disagreeable to me, I should have thought it a place formed for animation and pleasure. There was a concert, in the course of which a hautbois concerto was so charmingly played, that I could have thought myself upon inchanted ground, had I had spirits more gentle to associate with. The hautbois in the open air is heavenly.

Mr. Smith endeavoured to attach himself to me with such officious assiduity and impertinent freedom, that he quite sickened me: indeed, M. Du Bois was the only man of the party to whom, voluntarily, I ever addressed myself. He is civil and respectful, and I have found nobody else so since I left Howard Grove. His English is very bad, but I prefer it to speaking French myself, which I dare not venture to do. I converse with him frequently, both to disengage myself from others, and to oblige Madame Duval, who is always pleased when he is attended to.

As we were walking about the orchestra, I

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heard a bell ring, and, in a moment, Mr. Smith, flying up to me, caught my hand, and, with a motion too quick to be resisted, ran away with me many yards before I had breath to ask his meaning, though I struggled as well as I could to get from him. At last, however, I insisted upon stopping: "Stopping, Ma'am!" cried he, "why, we must run on, or we shall lose the cascade."

And then again, he hurried me away, mixing with a crowd of people, all running with so much velocity, that I could not imagine what had raised such an alarm. We were soon followed by the rest of the party; and my surprise and ignorance proved a source of diversion to them all, which was not exhausted the whole evening. Young Branghton, in particular, laughed till he could hardly stand.

The scene of the cascade I thought extremely pretty, and the general effect striking and lively.

But this was not the only surprise which was to divert them at my expense; for they led me about the garden, purposely to enjoy my first sight of various other deceptions.

About ten o'clock, Mr. Smith having chosen a *box* in a very conspicuous place, we all went to supper. Much fault was found with every thing that was ordered, though not a morsel of any thing was left; and the dearness of the pro-

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visions, with conjectures upon what profit was made by them, supplied discourse during the whole meal.

When wine and cider were brought, Mr. Smith said, "Now let's enjoy ourselves; now is the time, or never! Well, Ma'am, and how do you like Vauxhall?"

"Like it!" cried young Branghton, "why, how can she help liking it? she has never seen such a place before, that I'll answer for."

"For my part," said Miss Branghton, "I like it because it is not vulgar."

"This must have been a fine treat for you, Miss!" said Mr. Branghton; "why, I suppose, you was never so happy in all your life before?"

I endeavoured to express my satisfaction with some pleasure, yet I believe they were much amazed at my coldness.

"Miss ought to stay in town till the last night," said young Branghton, "and then, it's my belief, she'd say something to it! Why, Lord! it's the best night of any; there's always a riot,—and there the folks run about,—and then there's such squealing and squalling!—and there all the lamps are broke,—and the women run skimper-scamper;—I declare I would not take five guineas to miss the last night!"

I was very glad when they all grew tired of sitting, and called for the waiter to pay the bill.

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The Miss Branghtons said they would walk on, while the gentlemen settled the account, and asked me to accompany them; which, however, I declined.

"You girls may do as you please," said Madame Duval, "but as to me, I promise you, I shan't go nowhere without the gentlemen."

"No more, I suppose, will my *cousin*," said Miss Branghton; looking reproachfully towards Mr. Smith.

This reflection, which I feared would flatter his vanity, made me, most unfortunately, request Madame Duval's permission to attend them. She granted it, and away we went, having promised to meet in the room.

To the room, therefore, I would immediately have gone: but the sisters agreed that they would first have a *little pleasure*, and they tittered and talked so loud that they attracted universal notice.

"Lord, Polly!" said the eldest, "suppose we were to take a turn in the dark walks!"

"Aye, do!" answered she, "and then we'll hide ourselves, and then Mr. Brown will think we are lost."

I remonstrated very warmly against this plan; telling them that it would endanger our missing the rest of the party all the evening.

"Oh, dear!" cried Miss Branghton, "I thought how uneasy Miss would be without a beau!"

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This impertinence I did not think worth answering; and, quite by compulsion, I followed them down a long alley, in which there was hardly any light.

By the time we came near the end, a large party of gentlemen, apparently very riotous, and who were hallooing, leaning on one another, and laughing immoderately, seemed to rush suddenly from behind some trees, and, meeting us face to face, put their arms at their sides and formed a kind of circle, which first stopped our proceeding, and then our retreating, for we were presently entirely inclosed. The Miss Branghtons screamed aloud, and I was frightened exceedingly: our screams were answered with bursts of laughter; and for some minutes, we were kept prisoners; till, at last, one of them, rudely seizing hold of me, said I was a pretty little creature.

Terrified to death, I struggled with such vehemence to disengage myself from him, that I succeeded, in spite of his efforts to detain me; and immediately, and with a swiftness which fear only could have given me, I flew rather than ran up the walk, hoping to secure my safety by returning to the lights and company we had so foolishly left: but before I could possibly accomplish my purpose, I was met by another party of men, one of whom placed himself so directly in my way, calling out, "Whither so

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fast, my love?"—that I could only have proceeded, by running into his arms.

In a moment, both my hands, by different persons, were caught hold of; and one of them, in a most familiar manner, desired, when I ran next, to accompany me in a race; while the rest of the party stood still and laughed.

I was almost distracted with terror, and so breathless with running, that I could not speak; till another advancing, said, I was as handsome as an angel, and desired to be of the party. I then just articulated, "For heaven's sake, Gentlemen, let me pass!"

Another, then, rushing suddenly forward, exclaimed, "Heaven and earth! what voice is that?—"

"The voice of the prettiest little actress I have seen this age," answered one of my persecutors.

"No,—no,—no!—" I *panted* out, "I am no actress,—pray let me go,—pray let me pass!"

"By all that's sacred," cried the same voice, which I then knew for Sir Clement Willoughby's, "'tis herself!"

"Sir Clement Willoughby!" cried I. "O Sir, assist—assist me—or I shall die with terror!—"

"Gentlemen," cried he, disengaging them all from me in an instant, "pray leave this lady

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Loud laughs proceeded from every mouth; and two or three said, "*Willoughby has all the luck!*" But one of them, in a passionate manner, vowed he would not give me up, for that he had the first right to me, and would support it.

"You are mistaken," said Sir Clement, "this lady is—I will explain myself to you another time: but, I assure you, you are all mistaken."

And then, taking my willing hand, he led me off, amidst the loud acclamations, laughter, and gross merriment of his impertinent companions.

As soon as we had escaped from them, Sir Clement, with a voice of surprise, exclaimed, "My dearest creature! what wonder, what strange revolution, has brought you to such a spot as this?"

Ashamed of my situation, and extremely mortified to be thus recognised by him, I was for some time silent, and when he repeated his question, only stammered out, "I have,—I hardly know how,—lost myself from my party."

He caught my hand, and eagerly pressing it, in a passionate voice, said, "Oh that I had sooner met with thee!"

Surprised at a freedom so unexpected, I angrily broke from him; saying, "Is this the protection you give me, Sir Clement?"

And then I saw, what the perturbation of my

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mind had prevented my sooner noticing, that he had led me, though I know not how, into another of the dark alleys, instead of the place whither I meant to go.

"Good God!" I cried, "where am I?—What way are you going?—"

"Where," answered he, "we shall be least observed."

Astonished at this speech, I stopped short, and declared I would go no further.

"And why not, my angel?" again endeavouring to take my hand.

My heart beat with resentment; I pushed him away from me with all my strength, and demanded how he dared treat me with such insolence?

"Insolence!" repeated he.

"Yes, Sir Clement, *insolence!* from you, who know me, I had a claim for protection—not to such treatment as this."

"By heaven!" cried he, with warmth, "you distract me,—why, tell me,—why do I see you here?—Is this a place for Miss Anville?—these dark walks!—no party!—no companion!—by all that's good, I can scarce believe my senses!"

Extremely offended at this speech, I turned angrily from him, and, not designing to make any answer, walked on towards that part of the

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garden whence I perceived the lights and company.

He followed me; but we were both sometime silent.

"So you will not explain to me your situation?" said he, at length.

"No, Sir!" answered I, disdainfully.

"Nor yet—suffer me to make my own interpretation?—"

I could not bear this strange manner of speaking; it made my very soul shudder,—and I burst into tears.

He flew to me, and actually flung himself at my feet, as if regardless who might see him; saying, "O Miss Anville!—loveliest of women—forgive my—my—I beseech you forgive me;—if I have offended,—if I have hurt you—I could kill myself at the thought!—"

"No matter, Sir, no matter!" cried I; "if I can but find my friends,—I will never speak to, never see you again!"

"Good God!—good heaven!—my dearest life, what is it I have done? — what is it I have said?—"

"You best know, Sir, *what* and *why*;—but don't hold me here,—let *me* be gone; and do *you!*—"

"Not till you forgive me!—I cannot part with you in anger."

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"For shame, for shame, Sir!" cried I indignantly, "do you suppose I am to be thus compelled?—do you take advantage of the absence of my friends, to affront me?"

"No, Madam!" cried he, rising, "I would sooner forfeit my life than act so mean a part. But you have flung me into amazement unspeakable, and you will not condescend to listen to my request of giving me some explanation."

"The manner, Sir," said I, "in which you spoke that request, made, and will make me scorn to answer it."

"Scorn!—I will own to you, I expected not such displeasure from Miss Anville."

"Perhaps, Sir, if you had, you would less voluntarily have merited it."

"My dearest life! surely it must be known to you, that the man does not breathe, who adores you so passionately, so fervently, so tenderly, as I do!—why, then, will you delight in perplexing me?—in keeping me in suspense—in torturing me with doubt?—"

"I, Sir, delight in perplexing you!—You are much mistaken.—Your suspense, your doubts, your perplexities, are of your own creating;—and believe me, Sir, they may *offend*, but they can never *delight* me:—but, as you have yourself raised, you must yourself satisfy them."

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"Good God!—that such haughtiness and such sweetness can inhabit the same mansion!"

I made no answer, but quickening my pace, I walked on silently and sullenly; till this most impetuous of men, snatching my hand, which he grasped with violence, besought me to forgive him with such earnestness of supplication, that, merely to escape his importunities, I was forced to speak, and, in some measure, to grant the pardon he requested; though it was accorded with a very ill grace: but, indeed, I knew not how to resist the humility of his intreaties: yet never shall I recollect the occasion he gave me of displeasure, without feeling it renewed.

We now soon arrived in the midst of the general crowd; and, my own safety being then insured, I grew extremely uneasy for the Miss Branghtons, whose danger, however imprudently incurred by their own folly, I too well knew how to tremble for. To this consideration all my pride of heart yielded, and I determined to seek my party with the utmost speed; though not without a sigh did I recollect the fruitless attempt I had made, after the opera, of concealing from this man my unfortunate connexions, which I was now obliged to make known.

I hastened, therefore, to the room, with a view of sending young Branghton to the aid of his sisters. In a very short time, I perceived

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Madame Duval, and the rest, looking at one of the paintings. I must own to you, honestly, my dear Sir, that an involuntary repugnance seized me, at presenting such a set to Sir Clement,—he, who had been used to see me in parties so different! My pace slackened as I approached them,—but they presently perceived me.

"*Ah, Mademoiselle!*" cried M. Du Bois; "*Que je suis charmé de vous voir!*"

"Pray, Miss," cried Mr. Brown, "where's Miss Polly?"

"Why, Miss, you've been a long while gone," said Mr. Branghton; "we thought you'd been lost. But what have you done with your cousins?"

I hesitated,—for Sir Clement regarded me with a look of wonder.

"*Pardie,*" cried Madame Duval, "I sha'nt let you leave me again in a hurry. Why, here we've been in such a fright!—and all the while, I suppose, you've been thinking nothing about the matter."

"Well!" said young Branghton, "as long as Miss is come back, I don't mind; for as to Bid and Poll, they can take care of themselves. But the best joke is, Mr. Smith is gone all about a looking for you."

These speeches were made almost all in a breath: but when, at last, they waited for an

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answer, I told them, that in walking up one of the long alleys, we had been frightened and separated.

"The long alleys!" repeated Mr. Branghton, "and pray, what had you to do in the long alleys? why, to be sure, you must all of you have had a mind to be affronted?"

This speech was not more impertinent to me than surprising to Sir Clement, who regarded all the party with evident astonishment: however, I told young Branghton that no time ought to be lost, for that his sisters might require his immediate protection.

"But how will they get it?" cried this brutal brother; "if they've a mind to behave in such a manner as that, they ought to protect themselves; and so they may, for me."

"Well," said the simple Mr. Brown, "whether you go or no, I think I may as well see after Miss Polly."

The father, then, interfering, insisted that his son should accompany him; and away they went.

It was now that Madame Duval first perceived Sir Clement; to whom turning with a look of great displeasure, she angrily said, "*Ma foi*, so you are comed here, of all the people in the world!—I wonder, child, you would let such a—such a *person* as that keep company with you."

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"I am very sorry, Madam," said Sir Clement, in a tone of surprise, "if I have been so unfortunate as to offend you; but I believe you will not regret the honor I now have of attending Miss Anville, when you hear that I have been so happy as to do her some service."

Just as Madame Duval, with her usual *Ma foi,* was beginning to reply, the attention of Sir Clement was wholly drawn from her by the appearance of Mr. Smith, who coming suddenly behind me, and freely putting his hands on my shoulders, cried, "Oh, ho! my little runaway, have I found you at last? I have been scampering all over the gardens for you, for I was determined to find you, if you were above ground.—But how could you be so cruel as to leave us?"

I turned round to him, and looked with a degree of contempt that I hoped would have quieted him; but he had not the sense to understand me; and attempting to take my hand, he added, "Such a demure-looking lady as you are, who'd have thought of your leading one such a dance?—Come, now, don't be so coy, —only think what a trouble I have had in running after you!"

"The trouble, Sir," said I, "was of your own choice,—not mine." And I walked round to the other side of Madame Duval.

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Perhaps I was too proud,—but I could not endure that Sir Clement, whose eyes followed him with looks of the most surprised curiosity, should witness his unwelcome familiarity.

Upon my removal, he came up to me, and, in a low voice, said, "You are not, then, with the Mirvans?"

"No, Sir."

"And pray—may I ask,—have you left them long?"

"No, Sir."

"How unfortunate I am!—but yesterday I sent to acquaint the Captain I should reach the Grove by to-morrow noon! However, I shall get away as fast as possible. Shall you be long in town?"

"I believe not, Sir."

"And then, when you leave it—which way—will you allow me to ask, which way you shall travel?"

"Indeed,—I don't know."

"Not know!—But do you return to the Mirvans any more?"

"I—I can't tell, Sir."

And then, I addressed myself to Madame Duval with such a pretended earnestness, that he was obliged to be silent.

As he cannot but observe the great change in my situation, which he knows not how to account for, there is something in all these

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questions, and this unrestrained curiosity, that I did not expect from a man, who, when he pleases, can be so wellbred as Sir Clement Willoughby. He seems disposed to think that the alteration in my companions authorises an alteration in his manners. It is true, he has always treated me with uncommon freedom, but never before with so disrespectful an abruptness. This observation, which he has given me cause to make, of his *changing with the tide*, has sunk him more in my opinion than any other part of his conduct.

Yet I could almost have laughed, when I looked at Mr. Smith; who no sooner saw me addressed by Sir Clement, than, retreating aloof from the company, he seemed to lose at once all his happy selfsufficiency and conceit; looking now at the Baronet, now at himself; surveying, with sorrowful eyes, his dress; struck with his air, his gestures, his easy gaiety; he gazed at him with envious admiration, and seemed himself, with conscious inferiority, to shrink into nothing.

Soon after, Mr. Brown, running up to us, called out, "La! what, i'n't Miss Polly come yet?"

"Come!" said Mr. Branghton, "why, I thought you went to fetch her yourself, didn't you?"

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"Yes, but I couldn't find her;—yet I dare say I've been over half the garden."

"Half! but why did not you go over it all?"

"Why, so I will: but only I thought I'd just come and see if she was here first?"

"But where's Tom?"

"Why, I don't know: for he would not stay with me, all as ever I could say; for we met some young gentlemen of his acquaintance, and so he bid me go and look by myself; for he said, says he, I can divert myself better another way, says he."

This account being given, away again went this silly young man; and Mr. Branghton, extremely incensed, said he would go and see after them himself.

"So now," cried Madame Duval, "he's gone too! why, at this rate, we shall have to wait for one or other of them all night!"

Observing that Sir Clement seemed disposed to renew his inquiries, I turned towards one of the paintings, and, pretending to be very much occupied in looking at it, asked Mr. Du Bois some questions concerning the figures.

"Oh, *Mon Dieu!*" cried Madame Duval, "don't ask him; —your best way is to ask Mr. Smith, for he's been here the oftenest. Come, Mr. Smith, I dare say you can tell us all about them."

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"Why, yes, Ma'am, yes!" said Mr. Smith; who, brightening up at this application, advanced towards us with an air of assumed importance, which, however, sat very uneasily upon him, and begged to know what he should explain first; "For I have attended," said he, "to all these paintings, and know every thing in them perfectly well; for I am rather fond of pictures, Ma'am; and really, I must say, I think a pretty picture is a—a very—is really a very—is something very pretty.—"

"So do I too," said Madame Duval; "but pray now, Sir, tell us who that is meant for?" pointing to a figure of Neptune.

"That!—why that, Ma'am, is,—Lord bless me! I can't think how I come to be so stupid; but really I have forgot his name,—and yet, I know it as well as my own, too,—however, he's a *General*, Ma'am; they are all Generals."

I saw Sir Clement bite his lips; and, indeed, so did I mine.

"Well," said Madame Duval, "it's the oddest dress for a General ever I see!"

"He seems so capital a figure," said Sir Clement to Mr. Smith, "that I imagine he must be *Generalissimo* of the whole army."

"Yes, Sir, yes!" answered Mr. Smith, respectfully bowing, and highly delighted at being thus referred to, "you are perfectly right,

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—but I cannot for my life think of his name; —perhaps, Sir, you may remember it?"

"No, really," replied Sir Clement, "my acquaintance among the Generals is not so extensive.

The ironical tone of voice in which Sir Clement spoke, entirely disconcerted Mr. Smith; who, again retiring to an humble distance, seemed sensibly mortified at the failure of his attempt to recover his consequence.

Soon after, Mr. Branghton returned, with his youngest daughter, whom he had rescued from a party of insolent young men; but he had not yet been able to find the eldest. Miss Polly was really frightened, and declared she would never go into the dark walks again. Her father, leaving her with us, went in quest of her sister.

While she was relating her adventures, to which nobody listened more attentively than Sir Clement, we saw Mr. Brown enter the room.—"Oh, la!" cried Miss Polly, "let me hide myself, and don't tell him I'm come."

She then placed herself behind Madame Duval, in such a manner that she could not be seen.

"So Miss Polly is not come yet!" said the simple swain; "well, I can't think where she can be! I've been a looking, and looking, and

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looking all about; and I can't find her, all I can do."

"Well, but Mr. Brown," said Mr. Smith, "sha'n't you go and look for the lady again?"

"Yes, Sir!" said he sitting down, "but I must rest me a little bit first. You can't think how tired I am."

"O fie, Mr. Brown, fie!" cried Mr. Smith, winking at us, "tired of looking for a lady! Go, go, for shame!"

"So I will, Sir, presently; but you'd be tired too, if you'd walked so far; — besides, I think she's gone out of the garden, or else I must have seen something or other of her."

A *he, he, he!* of the tittering Polly, now betrayed her; and so ended this ingenious little artifice.

At last appeared Mr. Branghton and Miss Biddy, who, with a face of mixed anger and confusion, addressing herself to me, said, "So, Miss, so you ran away from me! Well, see if I don't do as much by you, some day or other! But I thought how it would be, you'd no mind to leave the *gentlemen*, though you'd run away from *me*."

I was so much surprised at this attack, that I could not answer her for very amazement; and she proceeded to tell us how ill she had been used, and that two young men had been

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making her walk up and down the dark walks by absolute force, and as fast as ever they could tear her along; and many other particulars, which I will not tire you with relating.

In conclusion, looking at Mr. Smith, she said, "but, to be sure, thought I, at least all the company will be looking for me; so I little expected to find you all here, talking as comfortably as ever you can: however, I know I may thank my cousin for it!"

"If you mean *me*, Madam," said I, very much shocked, "I am quite ignorant in what manner I can have been accessory to your distress."

"Why, by running away so! If you'd staid with us, I'll answer for it, Mr. Smith and M. Du Bois would have come to look for us; but I suppose they could not leave your ladyship."

The folly and unreasonableness of this speech would admit of no answer. But what a scene was this for Sir Clement!—his surprise was evident; and, I must acknowledge, my confusion was equally great.

We had now to wait for young Branghton, who did not appear for some time; and, during this interval, it was with difficulty that I avoided Sir Clement, who was on the rack of curiosity, and dying to speak to me.

When, at last, the hopeful youth returned, a

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long and frightful quarrel ensued between him and his father, in which his sisters occasionally joined, concerning his neglect; and he defended himself only by a brutal mirth, which he indulged at their expense.

Every one, now, seemed inclined to depart,—when, as usual, a dispute arose, upon the *way* of our going, whether in a coach or a boat. After much debating, it was determined that we should make two parties, one by the water and the other by land; for Madame Duval declared she would not, upon any account, go into a boat at night.

Sir Clement then said, that if she had no carriage in waiting, he should be happy to see her and me safe home, as his was in readiness.

Fury started into her eyes, and passion inflamed every feature, as she answered, "*Pardie*, no!—you may take care of yourself, if you please; but as to me, I promise you I sha'n't trust myself with no such person."

He pretended not to comprehend her meaning, yet, to wave a discussion, acquiesced in her refusal. The coach party fixed upon consisted of Madame Duval, M. Du Bois, Miss Branghton, and myself.

I now began to rejoice, in private, that, at least, our lodgings would be neither seen nor known by Sir Clement. We soon met with an

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hackney-coach, into which he handed me, and then took leave.

Madame Duval, having already given the coachman her direction, he mounted the box, and we were just driving off, when Sir Clement exclaimed, "By heaven, this is the very coach I had in waiting for myself!"

"This coach, your honor!" said the man, "no, that it i'n't."

Sir Clement, however, swore that it was; and, presently, the man, begging his pardon, said he had really forgotten that he was engaged.

I have no doubt but that this scheme occurred to him at the moment, and that he made some sign to the coachman, which induced him to support it: for there is not the least probability that the accident really happened, as it is most likely his own chariot was in waiting.

The man then opened the coach-door, and Sir Clement advancing to it, said, "I don't believe there is another carriage to be had, or I would not incommode you; but, as it may be disagreeable to you to wait here any longer, I beg you will not get out, for you shall be set down before I am carried home, if you will be so good as to make a little room."

And so saying, in he jumped, and seated himself between M. Du Bois and me, while our astonish-

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ment at the whole transaction was too great for speech. He then ordered the coachman to drive on, according to the directions he had already received.

For the first ten minutes, no one uttered a word; and then Madame Duval, no longer able to contain herself, exclaimed, "*Ma foi*, if this isn't one of the impudentest things ever I see!"

Sir Clement, regardless of this rebuke, attended only to me; however, I answered nothing he said, when I could possibly avoid so doing. Miss Branghton made several attempts to attract his notice, but in vain, for he would not take the trouble of paying her any regard.

Madame Duval, during the rest of the ride, addressed herself to M. Du Bois in French, and in that language exclaimed with great vehemence against boldness and assurance.

I was extremely glad when I thought our journey must be nearly at an end, for my situation was very uneasy to me, as Sir Clement perpetually endeavoured to take my hand. I looked out of the coach-window, to see if we were near home; Sir Clement, stooping over me did the same, and then, in a voice of infinite wonder, called out, "Where the devil is the man driving to?—why, we are in Broad Saint Giles's!"

"Oh, he's very right," cried Madame Duval,

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"so never trouble your head about that; for I sha'n't go by no directions of yours, I promise you."

When, at last, we stopped, at *an Hosier's* in *High Holborn*, — Sir Clement said nothing, but his *eyes*, I saw, were very busily employed in viewing the place and the situation of the house. The coach, he said, belonged to him, and therefore he insisted upon paying for it; and then he took leave. M. Du Bois walked home with Miss Branghton, and Madame Duval and I retired to our apartments.

How disagreeable an evening's adventure! not one of the party seemed satisfied, except Sir Clement, who was in high spirits: but Madame Duval was enraged at meeting with him; Mr. Branghton, angry with his children; the frolic of the Miss Branghtons had exceeded their plan, and ended in their own distress; their brother was provoked that there had been no riot; Mr. Brown was tired; and Mr. Smith mortified. As to myself, I must acknowledge, nothing could be more disagreeable to me, than being seen by Sir Clement Willoughby with a party at once so vulgar in themselves and so familiar to me.

And you, too, my dear Sir! will, I know, be sorry that I have met him; however, there is no apprehension of his visiting here, as Madame Duval is far too angry to admit him.

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LETTER XVI.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Holborn, June 18th.

MADAME DUVAL rose very late this morning; and, at one o'clock, we had but just breakfasted, when Miss Branghton, her brother, Mr. Smith, and Monsieur Du Bois, called to inquire after our healths.

This civility in young Branghton, I much suspect, was merely the result of his father's commands; but his sister and Mr. Smith, I soon found, had motives of their own. Scarce had they spoken to Madame Duval, when, advancing eagerly to me, "Pray, Ma'am," said Mr. Smith, "who was that gentleman?"

"Pray, cousin!" cried Miss Branghton, "was not he the same gentleman you ran away with that night at the opera?"

"Goodness! that he was," said young Branghton; "and, I declare, as soon as ever I saw him, I thought I knew his face."

"I'm sure I'll defy you to forget him," —

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answered his sister, "if once you had seen him: he is the finest gentleman I ever saw in my life; don't you think so, Mr. Smith?"

"Why, you won't give the lady time to speak," said Mr. Smith.—"Pray, Ma'am, what is the gentleman's name?"

"Willoughby, Sir."

"Willoughby! I think I have heard the name. Pray, Ma'am, is he married?"

"Lord, no! that he is not," cried Miss Branghton; "he looks too smart, by a great deal, for a married man. Pray, cousin, how did you get acquainted with him?"

"Pray, Miss," said young Branghton, in the same breath, "what's his business?"

"Indeed I don't know," answered I.

"Something very genteel, I dare say," added Miss Branghton, because he dresses so fine."

"It ought to be something that brings in a good income," said Mr. Smith, "for I'm sure he did not get that suit of clothes he had on under thirty or forty pounds; for I know the price of clothes pretty well;—pray, Ma'am, can you tell me what he has a year?"

"Don't talk no more about him," cried Madame Duval, "for I don't like to hear his name; I believe he's one of the worst persons in the world; for though I never did him no manner of harm, nor so much as hurt a hair of his

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head, I know he was an accomplice with that fellow, Captain Mirvan, to take away my life."

Every body but myself now crowding around her for an explanation, a violent rapping at the street-door was unheard; and, without any previous notice, in the midst of her narration, Sir Clement Willoughby entered the room. They all started, and, with looks of guilty confusion, as if they feared his resentment for having listened to Madame Duval, they scrambled for chairs, and in a moment were all formally seated.

Sir Clement, after a general bow, singling out Madame Duval, said, with his usual easiness, "I have done myself the honor of waiting on you, Madam, to inquire if you have any commands to Howard Grove, whither I am going to-morrow morning."

Then, seeing the storm that gathered in her eyes, before he allowed her time to answer, he addressed himself to me:—"and if you, Madam, have any with which you will honor me, I shall be happy to execute them."

"None at all, Sir!"

"None!—not to Miss Mirvan!—no message! no letter!"

"I wrote to Miss Mirvan yesterday by the post."

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"My application should have been earlier, had I sooner known your address."

"*Ma foi*," cried Madame Duval, recovering from her surprise, "I believe never nobody saw the like of this!"

"Of what! Madam?" cried the undaunted Sir Clement, turning quick towards her, "I hope no one has offended you?"

"You don't hope no such a thing!" cried she, half choked with passion, and rising from her chair. This motion was followed by the rest, and, in a moment, everybody stood up.

Still Sir Clement was not abashed; affecting to make a bow of *acknowledgment* to the company in general, he said, "Pray—I beg—Ladies,—Gentlemen,—pray don't let me disturb you! pray keep your seats."

"Pray, Sir," said Miss Branghton, moving a chair towards him, "won't you sit down yourself?"

"You are extremely good, Ma'am:—rather than make any disturbance—"

And so saying, this strange man seated himself, as did, in an instant, every body else, —even Madame Duval herself; who, overpowered by his boldness, seemed too full for utterance.

He then, and with as much composure as if he had been an expected guest, began to dis-

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course on the weather; — its uncertainty, — the heat of the public places in summer,—the emptiness of the town,—and other such common topics.

Nobody, however, answered him; Mr. Smith seemed afraid, young Branghton ashamed, M. Du Bois amazed, Madame Duval enraged, and myself determined not to interfere: all that he could obtain, was the notice of Miss Branghton, whose nods, smiles, and attention, had some appearance of entering into conversation with him.

At length, growing tired, I suppose, of engaging everybody's eyes and nobody's tongue, addressing himself to Madame Duval and to me, he said, "I regard myself as peculiarly unfortunate, ladies, in having fixed upon a time for my visit to Howard Grove, when you are absent from it."

"So I suppose, Sir! so I suppose!" cried Madame Duval, hastily rising, and the next moment as hastily seating herself;—"you'll be wanting of somebody to make your game of, and so you may think to get *me* there again; —but I promise you, Sir! you won't find it so easy a matter to make me a fool: and besides that," raising her voice, "I've found you out, I assure you; so if ever you go to play your tricks upon me again, I'll make no more ado,

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but go directly to a justice of peace:—so, Sir! if you can't think of nothing but making people ride about the country, at all hours of the night, just for your diversion, why, you'll find I know some justices, as well as Justice Tyrrel."

Sir Clement was evidently embarrassed at this attack; yet he affected a look of surprise, and protested he did not understand her meaning.

"Well," cried she, "if I don't wonder where people can get such impudence! if you'll say that, you'll say any thing; however, if you swear till you're black in the face, I sha'nt believe you; for nobody sha'nt persuade me out of my senses, that I'm resolved."

"Doubtless not, Madam," answered he with some hesitation, "and I hope you do not suspect I ever had such an intention; my respect for you—"

"O Sir! you're vastly polite, all of a sudden! but I know what it's all for;—it's only for what you can get!—you could treat me like nobody at Howard Grove—but now you see I've a house of my own, you've a mind to wheedle yourself into it; but I sees your design, so you needn't trouble yourself to take no more trouble about that, for you shall never get nothing at my house,—not so much as a dish of tea:—so

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now, Sir! you see I can play you trick for trick."

There was something so extremely gross in this speech, that it even disconcerted Sir Clement, who was too much confounded to make any answer.

It was curious to observe the effect which his embarrassment, added to the freedom with which Madame Duval addressed him, had upon the rest of the company: every one, who before seemed at a loss how, or if at all, to occupy a chair, now filled it with the most easy composure; and Mr. Smith, whose countenance had exhibited the most striking picture of mortified envy, now began to recover his usual expression of satisfied conceit. Young Branghton, too, who had been apparently awed by the presence of so fine a gentleman, was again himself, rude and familiar; while his mouth was wide distended into a broad grin, at hearing *his aunt give the beau such a trimming.*

Madame Duval, encouraged by this success, looked around her with an air of triumph, and continued her harangue: "And so, Sir, I suppose you thought to have had it all your own way, and to have comed here as often as you pleased, and to have got me to Howard Grove again, on purpose to have served me as you did

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before; but you shall see I'm as cunning as you, so you may go and find somebody else to use in that manner, and to put your mask on, and to make a fool of; for as to me, if you go to tell me your stories about the Tower again for a month together, I'll never believe 'em no more; and I'll promise you, Sir, if you think I like such jokes, you'll find I'm no such person."

"I assure you, Ma'am,—upon my honor—I really don't comprehend—I fancy there is some misunderstanding—"

"What, I suppose you'll tell me next you don't know nothing of the matter!"

"Not a word, upon my honor."

O Sir Clement! thought I, is it thus you prize your honor?

"*Pardie*," cried Madame Duval, "this is the most provokingest part of all! why, you might as well tell me I don't know my own name."

"Here is certainly some mistake; for I assure you, Ma'am—"

"Don't assure me nothing!" cried Madame Duval, raising her voice, "I know what I'm saying, and so do you too; for did not you tell me all that about the Tower, and about M. Du Bois? — why, M. Du Bois wasn't never there, nor nigh it, and so it was all your own invention.

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"May there not be two persons of the same name?—the mistake was but natural."

"Don't tell me of no mistake, for it was all on purpose; besides, did not you come, all in a mask, to the chariot-door, and help to get me put in that ditch?—I'll promise you, I've had the greatest mind in the world to take the law of you ever since; and if ever you do as much again, so I will, I assure you!"

Here Miss Branghton tittered; Mr. Smith smiled contemptuously; and young Branghton thrust his handkerchief into his mouth, to stop his laughter.

The situation of Sir Clement, who saw all that passed, became now very awkward, even to himself, and he stammered very much in saying, "Surely, Madam!—surely, you—you cannot do me the—the injustice to think—that I had any share in the—the—the misfortune which—"

"*Ma foi*, Sir!" cried Madame Duval, with increasing passion, "you'd best not stand talking to me at that rate; I know it *was* you,—and if you stay there, a provoking me in such a manner, I'll send for a constable this minute."—Young Branghton, at these words, in spite of all his efforts, burst into a loud laugh; nor could either his sister, or Mr. Smith, though with more moderation, forbear joining in his mirth.

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Sir Clement darted his eyes towards them with looks of the most angry contempt, and then told Madame Duval that he would not now detain her to make his vindication, but would wait on her some time when she was alone.

"O *pardie*, Sir!" cried she, "I don't desire none of your company; and if you wasn't the most boldest person in the world, you would not dare look me in the face."

The ha, ha, ha's! and he, he, he's! grew more and more uncontrollable, as if the restraint from which they had burst had added to their violence. Sir Clement could no longer endure being the object who excited them, and having no answer ready for Madame Duval, he hastily stalked towards Mr. Smith and young Braughton, and sternly demanded what they laughed at?

Struck by the air of importance which he assumed, and alarmed at the angry tone of his voice, their merriment ceased as instantaneously as if it had been directed by clock-work, and they stared foolishly, now at him, now at each other, without making any answer but a simple "*Nothing*, Sir!"

"Oh, *pour le coup*," cried Madame Duval, "this is too much! pray, Sir! what business have you to come here, a ordering people that

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comes to see me? I suppose next, nobody must laugh but yourself!"

"With me, Madam," said Sir Clement, bowing, "a *lady* may do any thing, and, consequently, there is no liberty in which I shall not be happy to indulge *you*:—but it has never been my custom to give the same licence to *gentlemen*."

Then, advancing to me, who had sat very quietly on a window during this scene, he said, "Miss Anville, I may at least acquaint our friends at Howard Grove, that I had the honor of leaving you in good health." And then, lowering his voice, he added, "For heaven's sake! my dearest creature, who are these people? and how came you so strangely situated?"

"I beg my respects to all the family, Sir," answered I, aloud; "and I hope you will find them well."

He looked at me reproachfully, but kissed my hand; and then, bowing to Madame Duval and Miss Branghton, passed hastily by the men, and made his exit.

I fancy he will not be very eager to repeat his visits; for I should imagine he has rarely, if ever, been before in a situation so awkward and disagreeable.

Madame Duval has been all spirits and exultation ever since he went, and only wishes Captain Mirvan would call, that she might *do the same*

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by him. Mr. Smith, upon hearing that he was a Baronet, and seeing him drive off in a very beautiful chariot, declared that he would not have laughed upon any account, had he known his rank, and regretted extremely having missed such an opportunity of making so *genteel* an *acquaintance*; young Branghton vowed, that, if he had known as much, he would have *asked for his custom*; and his sister has sung his praises ever since, protesting she thought, *all along*, he was a man of *quality* by his *look*.

LETTER XVII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

June 21.

THE last three evenings have passed tolerably quiet, for the Vauxhall adventures had given Madame Duval a surfeit of public places: home, however, soon growing tiresome, she determined to-night, she said, to relieve her *ennui* by some amusement; and it was, therefore, settled that we should call upon the Branghtons at their house, and thence proceed to Marybone Gardens.

But, before we reached Snow-hill, we were caught in a shower of rain: we hurried into the shop, where the first object I saw was Mr. Macartney, with a book in his hand, seated in the same corner where I saw him last; but his looks were still more wretched than before, his face yet thinner, and his eyes sunk almost hollow into his head. He lifted them up as we entered and I even thought that they emitted a gleam of joy: involuntarily, I made to him my first

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curtsey; he rose and bowed with a precipitation that manifested surprise and confusion.

In a few minutes we were joined by all the family, except Mr. Smith, who fortunately was engaged.

Had all the future prosperity of our lives depended upon the good or bad weather of this evening, it could not have been treated as a subject of greater importance. "Sure never any thing was so unlucky!"—"Lord how provoking!"—"It might rain for ever, if it would hold up now!—" These, and such expressions, with many anxious observations upon the kennels, filled up all the conversation till the shower was over.

And then a very warm debate arose, whether we should pursue our plan, or defer it to some finer evening; the Miss Branghtons were for the former; their father was sure it would rain again; Madame Duval, though she detested returning home, yet dreaded the dampness of the gardens.

M. Du Bois then proposed going to the top of the house, to examine whether the clouds looked threatening or peaceable; Miss Branghton, starting at this proposal, said they might go to Mr. Macartney's room, if they would, but not to hers.

This was enough for the brother; who, with a loud laugh, declared he would have some *fun*,

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and immediately led the way, calling to us all to follow. His sisters both ran after, but no one else moved.

In a few minutes young Branghton, coming half way down stairs, called out, "Lord! why don't you all come? why here's Poll's things all about the room!"

Mr. Branghton then went; and Madame Duval, who cannot bear to be excluded from whatever is going forward, was handed up stairs by M. Du Bois.

I hesitated a few moments, whether or not to join them; but soon perceiving that Mr. Macartney had dropped his book, and that I engrossed his whole attention, I prepared, from mere embarrassment, to follow them.

As I went, I heard him move from his chair and walk slowly after me. Believing that he wished to speak to me, and earnestly desiring myself to know if, by your means, I could possibly be of any service to him, I first slackened my pace and then turned back. But, though I thus met him half-way, he seemed to want courage or resolution to address me; for, when he saw me returning, with a look extremely disordered, he retreated hastily from me.

Not knowing what I ought to do, I went to the street-door, where I stood some time, hoping he would be able to recover himself: but, on

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the contrary, his agitation increased every moment; he walked up and down the room, in a quick but unsteady pace, seeming equally distressed and irresolute: and, at length, with a deep sigh, he flung himself into a chair.

I was so much affected by the appearance of such extreme anguish, that I could remain no longer in the room; I therefore glided by him, and went up stairs; but, ere I had gone five steps, he precipitately followed me, and, in a broken voice, called out, "Madam!—for heaven's sake!—"

He stopped, but I instantly descended, restraining, as well as I was able, the fulness of my own concern. I waited some time, in painful expectation for his speaking: all that I had heard of his poverty occurring to me, I was upon the point of presenting him my purse, but the fear of mistaking or offending him deterred me. Finding, however, that he continued silent, I ventured to say,—"Did you, Sir! wish to speak to me?"

"I did!" cried he, with quickness, "but now —I cannot!"—

"Perhaps, Sir, another time!—perhaps, if you recollect yourself—"

"Another time!" repeated he mournfully, "alas! I look not forward but to misery and despair!"

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"Oh, Sir!" cried I, extremely shocked, "you must not talk thus!—if you forsake *yourself*, how can you expect—"

I stopped. "Tell me, tell me," cried he, with eagerness, "who you are?—whence you come?—and by what strange means you seem to be arbitress and ruler of the destiny of such a wretch as I am?"

"Would to heaven," cried I, "I could serve you!"

"You can!"

"And how?—pray, tell me how?"

"To tell you is death to me!—yet I *will* tell you,—I have a *right* to your assistance,—you have deprived me of the only resource to which I could apply,—and therefore—"

"Pray, pray, speak!" cried I, putting my hand into my pocket, "they will be down stairs in a moment!"

"I will, Madam!—Can you—will you—I think you will!—may I then—" he stopped and paused, "say, will you—" then suddenly turning from me, "Great heaven! I cannot speak!" and he went back to the shop.

I now put my purse in my hand, and following him, said, "If, indeed, Sir! I can assist you, why should you deny me so great a satisfaction? Will you permit me to—"

I dared not go on; but with a countenance

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LETTER XVIII.

MR. VILLARS TO EVELINA.

Berry Hill.

DISPLEASURE! my Evelina?—you have but done your duty; you have but shown that humanity, without which I should blush to own my child. It is mine, however, to see that your generosity be not repressed, by your suffering from indulging it; I remit to you, therefore, not merely a token of my approbation, but an acknowledgment of my desire to participate in your charity.

O my child! were my fortune equal to my confidence in thy benevolence, with what transport should I, through thy means, devote it to the relief of indigent virtue! yet let us not repine at the limitation of our power; for, while our bounty is proportioned to our ability, the difference of the greater or less donation can weigh but little in the scale of justice.

In reading your account of the misguided man, whose misery has so largely excited your

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compassion, I am led to apprehend that his unhappy situation is less the effect of misfortune than of misconduct. If he is reduced to that state of poverty represented by the Branghtons, he should endeavour by activity and industry to retrieve his affairs; and not pass his time in idle reading, in the very shop of his creditor.

The pistol scene made me shudder: the courage with which you pursued this desperate man at once delighted and terrified me. Be ever thus, my dearest Evelina, dauntless in the cause of distress! let no weak fears, no timid doubts, deter you from the exertion of your duty, according to the fullest sense of it that nature has implanted in your mind. Though gentleness and modesty are the peculiar attributes of your sex; yet fortitude and firmness, when occasion demands them, are virtues as noble and as becoming in women as in men: the right line of conduct is the same for both sexes, though the manner in which it is pursued may somewhat vary, and be accommodated to the strength or weakness of the different travellers.

There is, however, something so mysterious in all you have yet seen or heard of this wretched man, that I am unwilling to stamp a bad impression of his character upon so slight and partial a knowledge of it. Where any

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thing is doubtful, the ties of society and the laws of humanity claim a favorable interpretation; but remember, my dear child! that those of discretion have an equal claim to your regard.

As to Sir Clement Willoughby, I know not how to express my indignation at his conduct. Insolence so insufferable, and the implication of suspicions so shocking, irritate me to a degree of wrath, which I hardly thought my almost worn-out passions were capable of again experiencing. You must converse with him no more; he imagines, from the pliability of your temper, that he may offend you with impunity; but his behaviour justifies, nay, calls for, your avowed resentment: do not, therefore, hesitate in forbidding him your sight.

The Branghtons, Mr. Smith, and young Brown, however illbred and disagreeable, are objects too contemptible for serious displeasure: yet I grieve much that my Evelina should be exposed to their rudeness and impertinence.

The very day that this tedious month expires, I shall send Mrs. Clinton to town, who will accompany you to Howard Grove. Your stay there will, I hope, be short; for I feel daily an increasing impatience to fold my beloved child to my bosom!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

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LETTER XIX.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Holborn, June 27th.

I HAVE just received, my dearest Sir! your kind present, and still kinder letter. Surely never had orphan so little to regret as your grateful Evelina! Though motherless, though worse than fatherless,—bereft from infancy of the two first and greatest blessings of life,—never has she had cause to deplore their loss; never has she felt the omission of a parent's tenderness, care, or indulgence;—never, but from sorrow for *them*, had reason to grieve at the separation! Most thankfully do I receive the token of your approbation; and most studiously will I endeavour so to dispose of it, as may merit your generous confidence in my conduct.

Your doubts concerning Mr. Macartney give me some uneasiness. Indeed, Sir, he has not the appearance of a man whose sorrows are the effect of guilt. But I hope, before I leave town, to be better acquainted with his situation, and

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enabled, with more certainty of his worth, to recommend him to your favor.

I am very willing to relinquish all acquaintance with Sir Clement Willoughby, as far as it may depend upon myself so to do; but, indeed, I know not how I should be able to absolutely *forbid him my sight*.

Miss Mirvan, in her last letter, informs me that he is now at Howard Grove, where he continues in high favor with the Captain, and is the life and spirit of the house. My time, since I wrote last, has passed very quietly;—Madame Duval having been kept at home by a bad cold, and the Branghtons by bad weather. The young man, indeed, has called two or three times; and his behaviour, though equally absurd, is more unaccountable than ever: he speaks very little, takes hardly any notice of Madame Duval, and never looks at me without a broad grin. Sometimes he approaches me, as if with intention to communicate intelligence of importance; and then, suddenly stopping short, laughs rudely in my face.

Oh, how happy shall I be, when the worthy Mrs. Clinton arrives!

June 29th.

Yesterday morning, Mr. Smith called, to acquaint us that the Hampstead assembly was

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to be held that evening; and then he presented Madame Duval with one ticket, and brought another to me. I thanked him for his intended civility, but told him I was surprised he had so soon forgotten my having already declined going to the ball.

"Lord, Ma'am!" cried he, "how should I suppose you was in earnest? Come, come! don't be cross; here's your grandmamma ready to take care of you, so you can have no fair objection, for she'll see that I don't run away with you. Besides, Ma'am, I got the tickets on purpose."

"If you were determined, Sir," said I, "in making me this offer, to allow me no choice of refusal or acceptance, I must think myself less obliged to your intention than I was willing to do."

"Dear Ma'am!" cried he, "you're so smart, there is no speaking to you;—indeed, you are monstrous smart, Ma'am! but come! your grandmamma shall ask you, and then I know you'll not be so cruel."

Madame Duval was very ready to interfere; she desired me to make no further opposition, said she should go herself, and insisted upon my accompanying her. It was in vain that I remonstrated; I only incurred her anger: and Mr. Smith, having given both the tickets to

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Madame Duval with an air of triumph, said he should call early in the evening, and took leave.

I was much chagrined at being thus compelled to owe even the shadow of an obligation to so forward a young man; but I determined that nothing should prevail upon me to dance with him, however my refusal might give offence.

In the afternoon, when he returned, it was evident that he purposed to both charm and astonish me by his appearance; he was dressed in a very showy manner, but without any taste; and the inelegant smartness of his air and deportment, his visible struggle against education to put on the fine gentleman, added to his frequent conscious glances at a dress to which he was but little accustomed, very effectually destroyed his aim of *figuring*, and rendered all his efforts useless.

"During tea, entered Miss Branghton and her brother. I was sorry to observe the consternation of the former, when she perceived Mr. Smith. I had intended applying to her for advice upon this occasion, but had been always deterred by her disagreeable abruptness. Having cast her eyes several times from Mr. Smith to me with manifest displeasure, she seated herself sullenly in the window, scarce answering

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Madame Duval's inquiries, and, when I spoke to her, turning absolutely away from me.

Mr. Smith, delighted at this mark of his importance, sat indolently quiet on his chair, endeavouring by his looks rather to display than to conceal his inward satisfaction.

"Good gracious!" cried young Branghton, "why, you're all as fine as fi'pence! Why, where are you going?"

"To the Hampstead ball," answered Mr. Smith.

"To a ball!" cried he; "Why, what, is aunt going to a ball? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, to be sure!" cried Madame Duval: "I don't know nothing need hinder me."

"And pray, aunt, will you dance too?"

"Perhaps I may; but I suppose! Sir, that's none of your business, whether I do or not."

"Lord! well, I should like to go! I should like to see aunt dance, of all things? But the joke is, I don't believe she'll get ever a partner."

"You're the most rudest boy ever I see," cried Madame Duval, angrily: "but, I promise you, I'll tell your father what you say; for I've no notion of such vulgarness."

"Why, Lord, aunt! what are you so angry for? there's no speaking a word, but you fly into a passion: you're as bad as Biddy or Poll for that, for you're always a scolding."

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"I desire, Tom!" cried Miss Branghton, "you'd speak for yourself, and not make so free with my name."

"There, now, she's up! there is nothing but quarrelling with the women: it's my belief they like it better than victuals and drink."

"Fie, Tom!" cried Mr. Smith, "you never remember your manners before the ladies:—I'm sure you never heard *me* speak so rude to them."

"Why, Lord! *you* are a beau; but that's nothing to me. So, if you've a mind, you may be so polite as to dance with aunt yourself." Then, with a loud laugh, he declared it would be *good fun* to see them.

"Let it be never so good, or never so bad," cried Madame Duval, "you won't see nothing of it, I promise you; so pray don't let me hear no more of such vulgar pieces of fun; for I assure you, I don't like it. And as to my dancing with Mr. Smith, you may see wonderfuller things than that any day in the week."

"Why, as to that, Ma'am!" said Mr. Smith, looking much surprised, "I always thought you intended to play at cards; and so I thought to dance with the young lady."

I gladly seized this opportunity to make my declaration that I should not dance at all.

"Not dance at all!" repeated Miss Branghton;

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yes, that's a likely matter, truly, when people go to balls."

"I wish she mayn't," said the brother; "'cause then Mr. Smith will have nobody but aunt for a partner. Lord, how mad he'll be!"

"Oh, as to that," said Mr. Smith, "I don't at all fear prevailing with the young lady, if once I get her to the room!"

"Indeed, Sir!" cried I, much offended by his conceit, "you are mistaken; and therefore I beg leave to undeceive you, as you may be assured my resolution will not alter."

"Then pray, Miss! if it is not impertinent," cried Miss Branghton, sneeringly, "what do you go for?"

"Merely and solely," answered I, "to comply with the request of Madame Duval."

"Miss!" cried young Branghton, "Bid only wishes it was she; for she has cast a sheep's eye at Mr. Smith this long while."

"Tom!" cried the sister, rising, "I've the greatest mind in the world to box your ears! How dare you say such a thing of me?"

"No, hang it, Tom! no, that's wrong," said Mr. Smith, simpering, "it is, indeed, to tell the lady's secrets.—But never mind him, Miss Biddy! for I won't believe him."

"Why, I know Bid would give her ears to

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go," returned the brother; "but only Mr. Smith likes Miss best,—so does everybody else."

While the sister gave him a very angry answer, Mr. Smith said to me, in a low voice, "Why, now, Ma'am! how can you be so cruel as to be so much handsomer than your cousins? Nobody can look at them when you are by."

"Miss," cried young Branghton, "whatever he says to you, don't mind him, for he means no good; I'll give you my word for it he'll never marry you; for he has told me, again and again, he'll never marry as long as he lives; besides, if he'd any mind to be married, there's Bid would have had him long ago, and thanked him too."

"Come, come, Tom! don't tell secrets; you'll make the ladies afraid of me; but, I assure you," lowering his voice, "if I *did* marry, it should be your cousin."

Should be!—did you ever, my dear Sir! hear such unauthorised freedom? I looked at him with a contempt I did not wish to repress, and walked to the other end of the room.

Very soon after, Mr. Smith sent for a hackney coach. When I would have taken leave of Miss Branghton, she turned angrily from me, without making any answer. She supposes, perhaps, that I have rather sought than endeavoured to avoid the notice and civilities of this conceited young man.

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The ball was at the *long room* at Hampstead. This room seems very well named; for I believe it would be difficult to find any other epithet which might with propriety distinguish it, as it is without ornament, elegance, or any sort of singularity, and merely to be marked by its length.

I was saved from the importunities of Mr. Smith, the beginning of the evening, by Madame Duval's declaring her intention to dance the two first dances with him herself. Mr. Smith's chagrin was very evident; but, as she paid no regard to it, he was necessitated to lead her out.

I was, however, by no means pleased, when she said she was determined to dance a minuet: indeed, I was quite astonished; not having had the least idea she would have consented to, much less proposed, such an exhibition of her person. She had some trouble to make her intentions known, as Mr. Smith was rather averse to speaking to the master of the ceremonies.

During this minuet, how much did I rejoice in being surrounded only with strangers!—she danced in a style so uncommon; her age, her showy dress, and an unusual quantity of *rouge*, drew upon her the eyes, and, I fear, the derision of the whole company. Who she danced with, I know not; but Mr. Smith was so illbred as to laugh at her very openly, and to speak of

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her with as much ridicule as was in his power. But I would neither look at nor listen to him; nor would I suffer him to proceed with a speech which he began, expressive of his vexation at being forced to dance with her. I told him, very gravely, that complaints upon such a subject might, with less impropriety, be made to every person in the room, than to me.

When she returned to us, she distressed me very much, by asking what I thought of her minuet. I spoke as civilly as I could, but the coldness of my compliment evidently disappointed her. She then called upon Mr. Smith to secure a good place among the country-dancers; and away they went, though not before he had taken the liberty to say to me, in a low voice, "I protest to you, Ma'am, I shall be quite out of countenance, if any of my acquaintance should see me dancing with the old lady!"

For a few moments I very much rejoiced at being relieved from this troublesome man; but scarce had I time to congratulate myself, before I was accosted by another, who *begged the favor of hopping a dance* with me.

I told him that I should not dance at all; but he thought proper to importune me, very freely, not to be so cruel; and I was obliged to assume no little haughtiness, before I could satisfy him I was serious.

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After this, I was addressed, much in the same manner, by several other young men, of whom the appearance and language were equally inelegant and lowbred: so that I soon found my situation was both disagreeable and improper; since, as I was quite alone, I fear I must seem rather to invite, than to forbid, the offers and notice I received: and yet, so great was my apprehension of this interpretation, that I am sure, my dear Sir! you would have laughed, had you seen how proudly grave I appeared.

I knew not whether to be glad or sorry, when Madame Duval and Mr. Smith returned. The latter instantly renewed his tiresome intreaties, and Madame Duval said she would go to the card-table: and as soon as she was accommodated, she desired us to join the dancers.

I will not trouble you with the arguments which followed. Mr. Smith teased me till I was weary of resistance; and I should at last have been obliged to submit, had I not fortunately recollected the affair of Mr. Lovel, and told my persecutor, that it was impossible I should dance with him, even if I wished it, as I had refused several persons in his absence.

He was not contented with being extremely chagrined, b ut took the liberty, openly and warmly, to expostulate with me upon not having said I was engaged.

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The total disregard with which, involuntarily, I heard him, made him soon change the subject. In truth, I had no power to attend to him; for all my thoughts were occupied in retracing the transactions of the two former balls at which I had been present. The party—the conversation—the company—oh, how great the contrast!

In a short time, however, he contrived to draw my attention to himself, by his extreme impertinence; for he chose to express what he called his *admiration* of me, in terms so open and familiar, that he forced me to express my displeasure with equal plainness.

But how was I surprised, when I found he had the temerity—what else can I call it?—to impute my resentment to doubts of his honor; for he said, "My dear Ma'am! you must be a little patient; I assure you I have no bad designs; I have not upon my word; but, really, there is no resolving upon such a thing as matrimony all at once; what with the loss of one's liberty, and what with the ridicule of all one's acquaintance. — I assure you, Ma'am! you are the first lady who ever made me even demur upon this subject; for, after all, my dear Ma'am! marriage is the devil!"

"Your opinion, Sir," answered I, "of either the married or the single life, can be of no man-

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ner of consequence to me, and therefore I would by no means trouble you to discuss their different merits."

"Why, really, Ma'am! as to your being a little out of sorts, I must own I can't wonder at it; for, to be sure, marriage is all in all with the ladies; but with us, gentlemen, it's quite another thing! Now only put yourself in my place,—suppose you had such a large acquaintance of gentlemen as I have,—and that you had always been used to appear a little—a little smart among them,—why, now, how should you like to let yourself down, all at once, into a married man?"

I could not tell what to answer; so much conceit, and so much ignorance, both astonished and silenced me.

"I assure you, Ma'am!" added he, "there is not only Miss Biddy,—though I should have scorned to mention her, if her brother had not blabb'd; for I'm quite particular in keeping ladies secrets,—but there are a great many other ladies that have been proposed to me; but I never thought twice of any of them,—that is, not in a *serious* way: so you may very well be proud," offering to take my hand, "for I assure you there is nobody so likely to catch me at last as yourself."

"Sir!" cried I, drawing myself back as haughtily as I could, "you are totally mistaken, if you

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imagine you have given me any pride I felt not before, by this conversation; on the contrary, you must allow me to tell you, I find it too humiliating to bear with it any longer."

I then placed myself behind the chair of Madame Duval; who, when she heard of the partners I had refused, pitied my ignorance of the world, but no longer insisted upon my dancing.

Indeed, the extreme vanity of this man makes me exert a spirit which I did not, till now, know that I possessed: but I cannot endure that he should think me at his disposal.

The rest of the evening passed very quietly, as Mr. Smith did not again attempt speaking to me; except, indeed, after we had left the room; and while Madame Duval was seating herself in the coach, he said, in a voice of *pique*, "Next time I take the trouble to get any tickets for a young lady, I'll make a bargain beforehand that she sha'n't turn me over to her grandmother."

We came home very safe; and thus ended this so long projected and most disagreeable affair.

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LETTER XX.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

I HAVE just received a most affecting letter from Mr. Macartney. I will inclose it, my dear Sir, for your perusal. More than ever have I cause to rejoice that I was able to assist him.

MR. MACARTNEY TO MISS ANVILLE.

MADAM,

IMPRESSED with the deepest, the most heart-felt sense of the exalted humanity with which you have rescued from destruction an unhappy stranger, allow me, with the humblest gratitude, to offer you my fervent acknowledgments, and to implore your pardon for the terror I have caused you.

You bid me, Madam, live!—I have now, indeed, a motive for life; since I should not wil-

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lingly quit the world, while I withhold from the needy and distressed any share of that charity which a disposition so noble would, otherwise, bestow upon them.

The benevolence with which you have interested yourself in my affairs induces me to suppose you would wish to be acquainted with the cause of that desperation from which you snatched me, and the particulars of that misery of which you have so wonderfully been a witness: yet, as this explanation will require that I should divulge secrets of a nature the most delicate, I must intreat you to regard them as sacred, even though I forbear to mention the names of the parties concerned.

I was brought up in Scotland; though my mother, who had the sole care of me, was an Englishwoman, and had not one relation in that country. She devoted to me her whole time. — The retirement in which we lived, and the distance from our natural friends, she often told me, were the effect of an unconquerable melancholy with which she was seized, upon the sudden loss of my father, some time before I was born.

At Aberdeen, where I finished my education, I formed a friendship with a young man of fortune, which I considered as the chief happiness of my life; — but, when he quitted his studies,

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I considered it as my chief misfortune; for he immediately prepared, by direction of his friends, to make the tour of Europe. As I was designed for the church, and had no prospect even of maintenance but from my own industry, I scarce dared permit even a wish of accompanying him. It is true, he would joyfully have borne my expenses; but my affection was as free from meanness as his own, and I made a determination the most solemn never to lessen its dignity by submitting to pecuniary obligations.

We corresponded with great regularity and the most unbounded confidence for the space of two years, when he arrived at Lyons in his way home. He wrote me, thence, the most pressing invitation to meet him at Paris, where he intended to remain some time. My desire to comply with his request and shorten our absence was so earnest, that my mother, too indulgent to controll me, lent me what assistance was in her power; and, in an ill-fated moment, I set out for that capital.

My meeting with this dear friend was the happiest event of my life: he introduced me to all his acquaintance; and so quickly did time seem to pass, at that delightful period, that the six weeks I had allotted for my stay were gone, ere I was sensible I had missed so many days. But I must now own, that the company of my

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friend was not the sole subject of my felicity: I became acquainted with a young lady, daughter of an Englishman of distinction, with whom I formed an attachment, which I have a thousand times vowed—a thousand times sincerely thought—would be lasting as my life. She had but just quitted a convent, in which she had been placed when a child, and, though English by birth, she could scarcely speak her native language. Her person and disposition were equally engaging; but chiefly I adored her for the greatness of the expectations which, for my sake, she was willing to resign.

When the time for my residence at Paris expired, I was almost distracted at the idea of quitting her; yet I had not the courage to make our attachment known to her father, who might reasonably form for her such views as would make him reject, with a contempt which I could not bear to think of, such an offer as mine. Yet I had free access to the house, where she seemed to be left almost wholly to the guidance of an old servant, who was my fast friend.

But, to be brief, the sudden and unexpected return of her father, one fatal afternoon, proved the beginning of the misery which has ever since devoured me. I doubt not but he had listened to our conversation; for he darted into the room with the rage of a madman. Heavens!

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what a scene followed!—what abusive language did the shame of a clandestine affair and the consciousness of acting ill induce me to brook! At length, however, his fury exceeded my patience,—he called me a beggarly, cowardly Scotchman. Fired at the words, I drew my sword; he, with equal alertness, drew his; for he was not an old man, but, on the contrary, strong and able as myself. In vain his daughter pleaded;—in vain did I, repentant of my anger, retreat;—his reproaches continued; myself, my country, were loaded with infamy; till, no longer constraining my rage,—we fought,—and he fell!

At that moment I could almost have destroyed myself! The young lady fainted with terror; the old servant, drawn to us by the noise of the scuffle, intreated me to escape, and promised to bring intelligence of what should pass to my apartment. The disturbance which I heard raised in the house obliged me to comply; and, in a state of mind inconceivably wretched, I tore myself away.

My friend, whom I found at home, soon discovered the whole affair. It was near midnight before the woman came. She told me that her master was living, and her young mistress restored to her senses. The absolute necessity for my leaving Paris, while any danger remained, was forcibly urged by my friend. The servant

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promised to acquaint him of whatever passed, and he to transmit to me her information. Thus circumstanced, with the assistance of this dear friend, I effected my departure from Paris, and, not long after, I returned to Scotland.—I would fain have stopped by the way, that I might have been nearer the scene of all my concerns, but the low state of my finances denied me that satisfaction.

The miserable situation of my mind was soon discovered by my mother; nor would she rest till I communicated the cause. She heard my whole story with an agitation which astonished me;—the *name* of the parties concerned, seemed to strike her with horror;—but when I said, *We fought, and he fell,*—"My son," cried she, "you have, then, murdered your father!" and she sunk breathless at my feet.—Comments, Madam, upon such a scene as this, would to you be superfluous, and to me agonising: I cannot, for both our sakes, be too concise. When she recovered, she confessed all the particulars of a tale which she had hoped never to have revealed.—Alas! the loss she had sustained of my father was not by death!—bound to her by no ties but those of honor, he had voluntarily deserted her!—Her settling in Scotland was not the effect of choice,—she was banished thither by a family but too justly in-

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censed;—pardon, Madam, that I cannot be more explicit!

My senses, in the greatness of my misery, actually forsook me, and for more than a week I was wholly delirious. My unfortunate mother was yet more to be pitied; for she pined with unmitigated sorrow, eternally reproaching herself for the danger to which her too strict silence had exposed me. When I recovered my reason, my impatience to hear from Paris almost deprived me of it again; and though the length of time I waited for letters might justly be attributed to contrary winds, I could not bear the delay, and was twenty times upon the point of returning thither at all hazards: at length, however, several letters arrived at once, and from the most insupportable of my afflictions I was then relieved; for they acquainted me that the horrors of parricide were not in reserve for me: they informed me also, that, as soon as the wound was healed, a journey would be made to England, where my unhappy *sister* was to be received by an aunt with whom she was to live.

This intelligence somewhat quieted the violence of my sorrows. I instantly formed a plan of meeting them in London, and, by revealing the whole dreadful story, convincing this irritated parent that he had nothing more to apprehend from his daughter's unfortunate choice. My

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mother consented, and gave me a letter to prove the truth of my assertions. As I could but ill afford to make this journey, I travelled in the cheapest way that was possible. I took an obscure lodging,—I need not, Madam, tell you where,—and boarded with the people of the house.

Here I languished, week after week, vainly hoping for the arrival of my *family;* but my impetuosity had blinded me to the imprudence of which I was guilty in quitting Scotland so hastily. My wounded father after his recovery relapsed; and when I had waited in the most comfortless situation, for six weeks, my friend wrote me word that the journey was yet deferred for some time longer.

My finances were then nearly exhausted; and I was obliged, though most unwillingly, to beg further assistance from my mother, that I might return to Scotland. Oh, Madam!—my answer was not from herself;—it was written by a lady who had long been her companion, and acquainted me that she had been taken suddenly ill of a fever,—and was no more!

The compassionate nature, of which you have given such noble proofs, assures me I need not, if I could, paint to you the anguish of a mind overwhelmed with such accumulated sorrows.

Inclosed was a letter to a near relation, which

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she had, during her illness, with much difficulty, written, and in which, with the strongest maternal tenderness, she described my deplorable situation, and intreated his interest to procure me some preferment. Yet so sunk was I by misfortune, that a fortnight elapsed before I had the courage or spirit to attempt delivering this letter: I was then compelled to it by want. To make my appearance with some decency, I was necessitated, myself, to the melancholy task of changing my colored clothes for a suit of mourning;—and then I proceeded to seek my relation.

I was informed that he was not in town.

In this desperate situation, the pride of my heart, which hitherto had not bowed to adversity, gave way; and I determined to intreat the assistance of my friend, whose offered services I had a thousand times rejected. Yet, Madam, so hard is it to root from the mind its favorite principles or prejudices, call them which you please, that I lingered another week ere I had the resolution to send away a letter, which I regarded as the death of my independence.

At length, reduced to my last shilling, damned insolently by the people of the house, and almost famished, I sealed this fatal letter, and, with a heavy heart, determined to take it to the post-office. But Mr. Branghton and his son

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suffered me not to pass through their shop with impunity; they insulted me grossly, and threatened me with imprisonment if I did not immediately satisfy their demands. Stung to the soul, I bid them have but a day's patience, and flung from them, in a state of mind too terrible for description.

My letter, which I now found would be received too late to save me from disgrace, I tore into a thousand pieces, and scarce could I refrain from putting an instantaneous—an unlicensed period to my existence.

In this disorder of my senses, I formed the horrible plan of turning footpad; for which purpose I returned to my lodging, and collected whatever of my apparel I could part with, which I immediately sold, and with the profits purchased a brace of pistols, powder, and shot. I hope, however, you will believe me, when I most solemnly assure you, my sole intention was to *frighten* the passengers I should assault with these dangerous weapons, which I had not loaded but from a resolution,—a dreadful one, I own, —to save *myself* from an ignominious death if seized: and, indeed, I thought that if I could but procure money sufficient to pay Mr. Branghton and make a journey to Scotland, I should soon be able, by the public papers, to discover whom I had injured, and to make private retr-

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bution. But, Madam, new to every species of villany, my perturbation was so great that I could with difficulty support myself: yet the Branghtons observed it not as I passed through the shop.

Here I stop: what followed is better known to yourself. But no time can ever efface from my memory that moment, when, in the very action of preparing for my own destruction, or the lawless seizure of the property of others, you rushed into the room and arrested my arm!—It was, indeed, an awful moment!—the hand of Providence seemed to intervene between me and eternity; I beheld you as an angel!—I thought you dropped from the clouds;—the earth, indeed, had never before presented to my view a form so celestial!—What wonder, then, that a spectacle so astonishing should, to a man disordered as I was, appear too beautiful to be human?

And now, Madam! that I have performed this painful task, the more grateful one remains of rewarding, as far as is in my power, your generous goodness, by assuring you it shall not be thrown away. You have awakened me to a sense of the false pride by which I have been actuated,—a pride, which, while it scorned assistance from a friend, scrupled not to compel it from a stranger, though at the hazard of reducing that stranger to a situation as destitute as my

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own. Yet, oh! how violent was the struggle which tore my conflicting soul, ere I could persuade myself to profit by the benevolence which you were so evidently disposed to exert in my favor!

By means of a ring, the gift of my much-regretted mother, I have for the present satisfied Mr. Branghton; and by means of your compassion, I hope to support myself, either till I hear from my friend, to whom at length I have written, or till the relation of my mother returns to town.

To talk to you, Madam, of paying my debt, would be vain; I never can! the service you have done me exceeds all power of return: you have restored me to my senses,—you have taught me to curb those passions which bereft me of them, and, since I cannot avoid calamity, to bear it as a man! An interposition so wonderfully circumstanced can never be recollected without benefit. Yet allow me to say, the pecuniary part of my obligation must be settled by my first ability.

I am, Madam, with the most profound respect and heart-felt gratitude,

Your obedient,

and devoted humble servant,

J. Macartney.

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LETTER XXI.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Holborn, July 1,—5 o'Clock in the morning.

OH, Sir! what an adventure have I to write! —all night it has occupied my thoughts; and I am now risen thus early, to write it to you.

Yesterday it was settled that we should spend the evening in Marybone Gardens, where Mr. Torr, a celebrated foreigner, was to exhibit some fireworks. The party consisted of Madame Duval, all the Branghton's, M. Du Bois, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Brown.

We were almost the first persons who entered the Gardens, Mr. Branghton having declared he would have *all he could get for his money*, which, at best, was only fooled away, at such silly and idle places.

We walked in parties, and very much detached from one another; Mr. Brown and Miss Polly led the way by themselves; Miss Branghton and Mr. Smith followed, and the latter seemed determined to be revenged for my behaviour at the

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ball, by transferring all his former attention for me to Miss Branghton, who received it with an air of exultation; and very frequently they each of them, though from different motives, looked back, to discover whether I observed their good intelligence. Madame Duval walked with Monsieur Du Bois; and Mr. Branghton by himself; but his son would willingly have attached himself wholly to me, saying frequently, "Come, Miss! let's you and I have a little fun together; you see they have all left us, so now let us leave them." But I begged to be excused, and went to the other side of Madame Duval.

This Garden, as it is called, is neither striking for magnificence nor for beauty; and we were all so dull and languid, that I was extremely glad when we were summoned to the orchestra, upon the opening of a concert; in the course of which I had the pleasure of hearing a concerto on the violin by Mr. Barthelemon, who, to me, seems a player of exquisite fancy, feeling, and variety.

When notice was given us that the fireworks were preparing, we hurried along to secure good places for the sight: but, very soon, we were so incircled and incommoded by the crowd, that Mr. Smith proposed the *ladies* should make interest for a form to stand upon; this was soon effected, and the men then left us, to accom-

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modate themselves better, saying they would return the moment the exhibition was over.

The firework was really beautiful, and told, with wonderful ingenuity, the story of Orpheus and Eurydice; but, at the moment of the fatal look which separated them for ever, there was such an explosion of fire, and so horrible a noise, that we all, as of one accord, jumped hastily from the form, and ran away some paces, fearing that we were in danger of mischief from the innumerable sparks of fire which glittered in the air.

For a moment or two, I neither knew nor considered whither I had run; but my recollection was soon awakened by a stranger's addressing me with, "Come along with me, my dear! and I'll take care of you."

I started, and then, to my great terror, perceived that I had out-run all my companions, and saw not one human being I knew! with all the speed in my power, and forgetful of my first fright, I hastened back to the place I had left; —but found the form occupied by a new set of people.

In vain, from side to side, I looked for some face I knew; I found myself in the midst of a crowd, yet without party, friend, or acquaintance. I walked, in disordered haste, from place to place, without knowing which way to turn

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or whither I went. Every other moment I was spoken to by some bold and unfeeling man, to whom my distress, which, I think, must be very apparent, only furnished a pretence for impertinent witticisms or free gallantry.

At last, a young officer, marching fiercely up to me, said, "You are a sweet pretty creature, and I enlist you in my service;" and then, with great violence, he seized my hand. I screamed aloud with fear, and, forcibly snatching it away, I ran hastily up to two ladies, and cried, "For heaven's sake, dear ladies, afford me some protection!"

They heard me with a loud laugh, but very readily said, "Ay, let her walk between us;" and each of them took hold of an arm.

Then, in a drawling, ironical tone of voice, they asked *what had frightened my little Ladyship?* I told them my adventure very simply, and intreated they would have the goodness to assist me in finding my friends.

O yes! to be sure, they said, I should not want for friends, whilst I was with them. Mine, I said, would be very grateful for any civilities with which they might favor me. But imagine, my dear Sir, how I must be confounded, when I observed that every other word I spoke produced a loud laugh! However, I will not dwell upon a conversation, which soon, to my inexpres-

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sible horror, convinced me I had sought protection from insult, of those who were themselves most likely to offer it! You, my dearest Sir, I well know, will both feel for and pity my terror, which I have no words to describe.

Had I been at liberty, I should have instantly run away from them, when I made the shocking discovery; but, as they held me fast, that was utterly impossible: and such was my dread of their resentment or abuse, that I did not dare to make any open attempt to escape.

They asked me a thousand questions, accompanied by as many halloos, of who I was, what I was, and whence I came. My answers were very incoherent,—but what, good heaven! were my emotions, when, a few moments afterwards, I perceived advancing our way—Lord Orville!

Never shall I forget what I felt at that instant! had I, indeed, been sunk to the guilty state which such companions might lead him to suspect, I could scarce have had feelings more cruelly depressing.

However, to my infinite joy, he passed us without distinguishing me; though I saw that, in a careless manner, his eyes surveyed the party.

As soon as he was gone, one of these unhappy women said, "Do you know that young fellow?"

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Not thinking it possible she should mean Lord Orville by such a term, I readily answered "No, Madam!"

"Why, then," answered she, "you have a monstrous good stare, for a little country Miss."

I now found I had mistaken her, but was glad to avoid an explanation.

A few minutes after, what was my delight to hear the voice of Mr. Brown, who called out, "Lord, i'n't that Miss what's-her-name?"

"Thank God!" cried I, suddenly springing from them both, "thank God! I have found my party."

Mr. Brown was, however, alone; and, without knowing what I did, I took hold of his arm.

"Lord, Miss!" cried he, "we've had such a hunt, you can't think! some of them thought you was gone home; but I says, says I, I don't think, says I, that she's like to go home all alone, says I."

"So that gentleman belongs to you, Miss, does he?" said one of the women.

"Yes, Madam!" answered I, "and I now thank you for your civility; but, as I am safe, I will not give you any further trouble."

I curtsied slightly, and would have walked away; but, most unfortunately, Madame Duval and the two Miss Branghton's just then joined us.

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They all began to make a thousand inquiries; to which I briefly answered, that I had been obliged to these two ladies for walking with me, and would tell them more another time: for, though I felt great *comparative* courage, I was yet too much intimidated by their presence to dare be explicit.

Nevertheless, I ventured, once more, to wish them good night, and proposed seeking Mr. Branghton. These unhappy women listened to all that was said with a kind of callous curiosity, and seemed determined not to take any hint. But my vexation was terribly augmented, when, after having whispered something to each other, they very cavalierly declared that they intended joining our party! and then one of them very boldly took hold of my arm, while the other, going round, seized that of Mr. Brown; and thus, almost forcibly, we were moved on between them, and followed by Madame Duval and the Miss Branghtons.

It would be very difficult to say which was greatest, my fright, or Mr. Brown's consternation; who ventured not to make the least resistance, though his uneasiness made him tremble almost as much as myself. I would instantly have withdrawn my arm; but it was held so tight, I could not move it; and poor Mr. Brown was circumstanced in the same manner on the

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other side; for I heard him say, "Lord, Ma'am, there's no need to squeeze one's arm so!"

And this was our situation,—for we had not taken three steps,—when,—oh, Sir!—we again met Lord Orville! but not again did he pass quietly by us: unhappily, I caught his eye;—both mine, immediately, were bent to the ground; but he approached me, and we all stopped.

I then looked up. He bowed.—Good God, with what expressive eyes did he regard me! never were surprise and concern so strongly marked;—yes, my dear Sir! he looked *greatly* concerned; and that—the remembrance of that is the only consolation I feel, for an evening the most painful of my life.

What he first said I know not; for, indeed, I seemed to have neither ears nor understanding; but I recollect that I only curtsied in silence. He paused for an instant, as if—I believe so,—as if unwilling to pass on; and then, finding the whole party detained, he again bowed and took leave.

Indeed, my dear Sir, I thought I should have fainted, so great was my emotion, from shame, vexation, and a thousand other feelings, for which I have no expressions. I absolutely tore myself from the woman's arm, and then, disengaging myself from that of Mr. Brown, I went

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to Madame Duval, and besought that she would not suffer me to be again parted from her.

I fancy that Lord Orville saw what passed;—for scarcely was I at liberty, ere he returned. Methought, my dear Sir! the pleasure, the surprise of that moment, recompensed me for all the chagrin I had before felt: for do you not think that this return manifests, from a character so quiet, so reserved as Lord Orville's, something like solicitude in my concerns?—such, at least, was the interpretation I involuntarily made upon again seeing him.

With a politeness to which I have been some time very little used, he apologised for returning, and then inquired after the health of Mrs. Mirvan, and the rest of the Howard Grove family. The flattering conjecture, which I have just acknowledged, had so wonderfully restored my spirits, that I believe I never answered him so readily and with so little constraint: very short, however, was the duration of this conversation; for we were soon most disagreeably interrupted.

The Miss Branghtons, though they saw almost immediately the characters of the women to whom I had so unfortunately applied, were, nevertheless, so weak and foolish as merely to *titter* at their behaviour;—as to Madame Duval, she was for some time so strangely imposed upon, that she thought they were two real fine ladies.

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Indeed, it is wonderful to see how easily and how frequently she is deceived: our disturbance, however, arose from young Brown, who was now between the two women, by whom his arms were absolutely pinioned to his sides: for a few minutes his complaints had been only murmured; but he now called out aloud, "Goodness, ladies, you hurt me like any thing! why, I can't walk at all, if you keep pinching my arms so!"

This speech raised a loud laugh in the women, and redoubled the tittering of the Miss Branghtons: for my own part, I was most cruelly confused; while the countenance of Lord Orville manifested a sort of indignant astonishment; and, from that moment, he spoke to me no more till he took leave.

Madame Duval, who now began to suspect her company, proposed our taking the first box we saw empty, bespeaking a supper, and waiting till Mr. Branghton should find us.

Miss Polly mentioned one she had remarked, to which we all turned; — Madame Duval instantly seated herself; and the two bold women, forcing the frightened Mr. Brown to go between them, followed her example.

Lord Orville, with an air of gravity that wounded my very soul, then wished me good night. I said not a word; but my face, if it

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had any connexion with my heart, must have looked melancholy indeed: and so, I have some reason to believe, it did; for he added, with much more softness though not less dignity, "Will Miss Anville allow me to ask her address, and to pay my respects to her before I leave town?"

Oh, how I changed color at this unexpected request!—yet, what was the mortification I suffered, in answering, "My Lord, I am—in Holborn!"

He then bowed, and left us.

What, what can he think of this adventure! how strangely, how cruelly have all appearances turned against me! Had I been blessed with any presence of mind, I should instantly have explained to him the accident which occasioned my being in such terrible company;—but I have none!

As to the rest of the evening, I cannot relate the particulars of what passed; for, to you, I only write of what I think, and I can think of nothing but this unfortunate—this disgraceful meeting. These two wretched women continued to torment us all, but especially poor Mr. Brown, who seemed to afford them uncommon diversion, till we were discovered by Mr. Branghton, who very soon found means to release us from their persecutions by frightening them

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away. We staid but a short time after they left us, which was all employed in explanations.

Whatever may be the construction which Lord Orville may put upon this affair, to me it cannot fail of being unfavorable.—To be seen—gracious heaven!—to be seen in company with two women of such character!—How vainly, how proudly have I wished to avoid meeting him, when only with the Branghtons and Madame Duval!—but now, how joyful should I be, had he seen me to no greater disadvantage! —Holborn, too! what a direction!—he, who had always—but I will not torment you, my dearest Sir, with any more of my mortifying conjectures and apprehensions: perhaps he may call,—and then I shall have an opportunity of explaining to him all the most shocking part of the adventure. And yet, as I did not tell him at whose house I lived, he may not be able to discover me; I merely said *in Holborn*; and he, who I suppose saw my embarrassment, forbore to ask any other direction.

Well, I must take my chance!

Yet let me, in justice to Lord Orville, and in justice to the high opinion I have always entertained of his honor and delicacy,—let me observe the difference of his behaviour, when nearly in the same situation, to that of Sir

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Clement Willoughby. He had at least equal cause to depreciate me in his opinion, and to mortify and sink me in my own: but far different was his conduct;—perplexed, indeed, he looked, and much surprised; but it was benevolently, not with insolence. I am even inclined to think that he could not see a young creature, whom he had so lately known in a higher sphere, appear so suddenly, so strangely, so disgracefully altered in her situation, without some pity and concern. But, whatever might be his doubts and suspicions, far from suffering them to influence his behaviour, he spoke, he looked with the same politeness and attention with which he had always honored me when countenanced by Mrs. Mirvan.

Once again, let me drop this subject.

In every mortification, every disturbance,—how grateful to my heart, how sweet to my recollection, is the certainty of your never-failing tenderness, sympathy, and protection! Oh, Sir! could I, upon this subject, could I write as I feel,—how animated would be the language of

Your devoted

EVELINA!

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LETTER XXII.

EVELINA TO THE REV. MR. VILLARS.

Holborn, July 1.

LISTLESS, uneasy, and without either spirit or courage to employ myself, from the time I had finished my last letter, I indolently seated myself at the window, where, while I waited Madame Duval's summons to breakfast, I perceived, among the carriages which passed by, a coronet coach, and, in a few minutes, from the window of it, Lord Orville! I instantly retreated, but not, I believe, unseen; for the coach immediately drove up to our door.

Indeed, my dear Sir, I must own I was greatly agitated: the idea of receiving Lord Orville by myself,—the knowledge that his visit was entirely to *me*,—the wish of explaining the unfortunate adventure of yesterday,—and the mortification of my present circumstances; all these thoughts, occurring to me nearly at the same time, occasioned me more anxiety, confusion, and perplexity, than I can possibly express.

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I believe he meant to send up his name; but the maid, unused to such a ceremony, forgot it by the way, and only told me that a great Lord was below, and desired to see me; and, the next moment, he appeared himself.

If formerly, when, in the circle of high life and accustomed to its manners, I so much admired and distinguished the grace, the elegance of Lord Orville,—think, Sir, how they must strike me now,—now, when, far removed from that splendid circle, I live with those to whom even civility is unknown and decorum a stranger!

I am sure I received him very awkwardly:—depressed by a situation so disagreeable, could I do otherwise? When his first inquiries were made, "I think myself very fortunate," he said, "in meeting with Miss Anville at home, and still more so in finding her disengaged."

I only curtsied. He then talked of Mrs. Mirvan; asked how long I had been in town, and other such general questions, which, happily, gave me time to recover from my embarrassment. After which, he said, "If Miss Anville will allow me the honor of sitting by her a few minutes," for we were both standing, "I will venture to tell her the motive which, next to inquiring after her health, has prompted me to wait on her thus early."

We were then both seated, and, after a short

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pause, he said, "How to apologise for so great a liberty as I am upon the point of taking, I know not;—shall I, therefore, rely wholly upon your goodness, and not apologise at all?"

I only bowed.

"I should be extremely sorry to appear impertinent,—yet I hardly know how to avoid it."

"Impertinent! O my Lord," cried I, eagerly, "that, I am sure, is impossible!"

"You are very good," answered he, "and encourage me to be ingenuous—"

Again he stopped: but my expectation was too great for speech: at last, without looking at me, in a low voice and hesitating manner, he said, "Were those ladies, with whom I saw you last night, ever in your company before?"

"No, my Lord!" cried I, rising, and coloring violently, "nor will they ever be again."

He rose too, and, with an air of the most condescending concern, said, "Pardon, Madam, the abruptness of a question which I knew not how to introduce as I ought, and for which I have no excuse to offer but my respect for Mrs. Mirvan, joined to the sincerest wishes for your happiness—yet I fear I have gone too far!"

"I am very sensible of the honor of your Lordship's attention," said I, "but—"

"Permit me to assure you," cried he, finding I hesitated, "that officiousness is not my

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characteristic; and that I would by no means have risked your displeasure, had I not been fully satisfied you were too generous to be offended without a real cause of offence."

"Offended!" cried I, "no, my Lord! I am only grieved,—grieved, indeed! to find myself in a situation so unfortunate, as to be obliged to make explanations which cannot but mortify and shock me."

"It is I alone," cried he, with some eagerness, "who am shocked; as it is I who deserve to be mortified; I seek no explanation; for I have no doubt, but, in mistaking me, Miss Anville injures herself: allow me, therefore, frankly and openly to tell you the intention of my visit."

I bowed, and we both returned to our seats.

"I will own myself to have been greatly surprised," continued he, "when I met you yesterday evening, in company with two persons who I was sensible merited not the honor of your notice; nor was it easy for me to conjecture the cause of your being so situated: yet, believe me, my incertitude did not for a moment do you injury; I was satisfied that their characters must be unknown to you; and I thought with concern of the shock you would sustain, when you discovered their unworthiness: I should not, however, upon so short an acquaintance, have usurped the privilege of intimacy, in giving my

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unasked sentiments upon so delicate a subject, had I not known that credulity is the sister of innocence, and therefore feared you might be deceived. A something, which I could not resist, urged me to the freedom I have taken to caution you; but I shall not easily forgive myself, if I have been so unfortunate as to give you pain."

The pride which his first question had excited now subsided into delight and gratitude; and I instantly related to him, as well as I could, the accident which had occasioned my joining the unhappy women with whom he had met me. He listened with an attention so flattering, seemed so much interested during the recital, and, when I had done, thanked me, in terms so polite, for what he was pleased to call my condescension, that I was almost ashamed either to look at or hear him.

Soon after, the maid came to tell me that Madame Duval desired to have breakfast made in her own room.

"I fear," cried Lord Orville, instantly rising, "that I have intruded upon your time,—yet who, so situated, could do otherwise?" Then, taking my hand, "Will Miss Anville allow me thus to seal my peace?" He pressed it to his lips, and took leave.

Generous, noble Lord Orville!—how disinterested his conduct! how delicate his whole

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behaviour! willing to advise, yet afraid to wound me!—Can I ever, in future, regret the adventure I met with at Marybone, since it has been productive of a visit so flattering? Had my mortifications been still more humiliating, my terrors still more alarming, such a mark of esteem—may I not call it so?—from Lord Orville, would have made me ample amends.

And indeed, my dear Sir! I require some consolation in my present very disagreeable situation; for, since he went, two incidents have happened, that, had not my spirits been particularly elated, would greatly have disconcerted me.

During breakfast, Madame Duval very abruptly asked if I should like to be married? and added, that Mr. Branghton had been proposing a match for me with his son. Surprised, and, I must own, provoked, I assured her that, in thinking of me, Mr. Branghton would very vainly lose his time.

"Why," cried she, "I have had grander views for you myself, if once I could get you to Paris and make you be owned; but, if I can't do that, and you can do no better, why, as you are both my relations, I think to leave my fortune between you; and then, if you marry, you never need want for nothing."

I begged her not to pursue the subject, as, I assured her, Mr. Branghton was totally disagree-

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able to me: but she continued her admonitions and reflections, with her usual disregard of whatever I could answer. She charged me, very peremptorily, neither wholly to discourage nor yet to accept Mr. Branghton's offer, till she saw what could be done for me: the young man, she added, had often intended to speak to me himself, but, not well knowing how to introduce the subject, he had desired her to pave the way for him.

I scrupled not, warmly and freely, to declare my aversion to this proposal; but it was to no effect; she concluded just as she had begun, by saying, that I should not *have him, if I could do better.*

Nothing, however, shall persuade me to listen to any other person concerning this odious affair.

My second cause of uneasiness arises, very unexpectedly, from M. Du Bois; who, to my infinite surprise, upon Madame Duval's quitting the room after dinner, put into my hand a note, and immediately left the house.

This note contains an open declaration of an attachment to me, which, he says, he should never have presumed to have acknowledged, had he not been informed that Madame Duval destined my hand to young Branghton,—a match which he cannot endure to think of. He beseeches me, earnestly, to pardon his temerity,

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professes the most inviolable respect, and commits his fate to time, patience, and pity.

This conduct in M. Du Bois gives me real concern, as I was disposed to think very well of him: it will not, however, be difficult to discourage him; and therefore I shall not acquaint Madame Duval of his letter, as I have reason to believe it would greatly displease her.

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LETTER XXIII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

July 5.

OH, SIR! how much uneasiness must I suffer, to counterbalance one short morning of happiness!

Yesterday the Branghtons proposed a party to Kensington-gardens; and, as usual, Madame Duval insisted upon my attendance.

We went in a hackney-coach to Piccadilly, and then had a walk through Hyde Park, which, in any other company, would have been delightful. I was much pleased with Kensington-gardens, and think them infinitely preferable to those of Vauxhall.

Young Branghton was extremely troublesome; he insisted upon walking by my side, and talked with me almost by compulsion: however, my reserve and coldness prevented his entering upon the hateful subject which Madame Duval had prepared me to apprehend. Once, indeed, when I was accidentally a few yards before the rest, he said, "I suppose, Miss, aunt has told you

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about you know what?—ha'n't she, Miss?"—But I turned from him without making any answer. Neither Mr. Smith nor Mr. Brown were of the party; and poor Mr. Du Bois, when he found that I avoided him, looked so melancholy that I was really sorry for him.

While we were strolling round the garden, I perceived, walking with a party of ladies at some distance, Lord Orville! I instantly retreated behind Miss Branghton, and kept out of sight till we had passed him: for I dreaded being seen by him again in a public walk, with a party of which I was ashamed.

Happily I succeeded in my design, and saw no more of him; for a sudden and violent shower of rain made us all hasten out of the gardens. We ran till we came to a small greenshop, where we begged shelter. Here we found ourselves in company with two footmen, whom the rain had driven into the shop. Their livery, I thought, I had before seen; and upon looking from the window, I perceived the same upon a coachman belonging to a carriage, which I immediately recollected to be Lord Orville's.

Fearing to be known, I whispered Miss Branghton not to speak my name. Had I considered but a moment, I should have been sensible of the inutility of such a caution, since not one of the party call me by any other ap-

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pellation than that of cousin or of *Miss*; but I am perpetually involved in some distress or dilemma from my own heedlessness.

This request excited very strongly her curiosity; and she attacked me with such eagerness and bluntness of inquiry, that I could not avoid telling her the reason of my making it, and, consequently, that I was known to Lord Orville,—an acknowledgment which proved the most unfortunate in the world; for she would not rest till she had drawn from me the circumstances attending my first making the acquaintance. Then, calling to her sister, she said, "Lord, Polly, only think! Miss has danced with a Lord!"

"Well," cried Polly, "that's a thing I should never have thought of! And pray, Miss! what did he say to you?"

This question was much sooner asked than answered; and they both became so very inquisitive and earnest, that they soon drew the attention of Madame Duval and the rest of the party; to whom, in a very short time, they repeated all they had gathered from me.

"Goodness! then," cried young Branghton, "if I was Miss, if I would not make free with his Lordship's coach to take me to town."

"Why, aye," said the father, "there would be some sense in that; that would be making

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some use of a Lord's acquaintance, for it would save us coach-hire."

"Lord, Miss!" cried Polly, "I wish you would; for I should like of all things to ride in a coronet coach!"

"I promise you," said Madame Duval, "I'm glad you've thought of it, for I don't see no objection;—so let's have the coachman called."

"Not for the world," cried I, very much alarmed; "indeed, it is utterly impossible."

"Why so?" demanded Mr. Branghton; "pray where's the good of your knowing a Lord, if you're never the better for him?"

"*Ma foi*, child!" said Madame Duval, "you don't know no more of the world than if you was a baby. Pray, Sir," to one of the footmen, "tell that coachman to draw up, for I wants to speak to him."

The man stared, but did not move. "Pray, pray, Madam!" said I, "pray, Mr. Branghton! have the goodness to give up this plan; I know but very little of his Lordship, and cannot, upon any account, take so great a liberty."

"Don't say nothing about it," said Madame Duval, "for I shall have it my own way: so if *you* won't call the coachman, Sir, I'll promise you I'll call him myself."

The footman, very impertinently, laughed and turned upon his heel. Madame Duval, ex-

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tremely irritated, ran out in the rain, and beckoned the coachman, who instantly obeyed her summons. Shocked beyond all expression, I flew after her, and intreated her with the utmost earnestness to let us return in a hackney-coach: —but oh!—she is impenetrable to persuasion! She told the man she wanted him to carry her directly to town, and that she would answer for him to Lord Orville. The man, with a sneer, thanked her, but said he should answer for himself; and was driving off, when another footman came up to him, with information that his Lord was gone into Kensington Palace, and would not want him for an hour or two.

"Why then, friend!" said Mr. Branghton, for we were followed by all the party, "where will be the great harm of your taking us to town?"

"Besides," said the son, "I'll promise you a pot of beer for my own share."

These speeches had no other answer from the coachman than a loud laugh, which was echoed by the insolent footmen. I rejoiced at their resistance, though I was certain that, if their Lord had witnessed their impertinence, they would have been instantly dismissed his service.

"*Pardie,*" cried Madame Duval, "if I don't think all the footmen are the most impudentest fellows in the kingdom! But I'll promise you

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I'll have your master told of your airs, so you'll get no good by 'em."

"Why, pray," said the coachman, rather alarmed, "did my Lord give you leave to use the coach?"

"It's no matter for that," answered she; "I'm sure if he's a gentleman, he'd let us have it sooner than we should be wet to the skin: but I'll promise you he shall know how saucy you've been, for this young lady knows him very well."

"Aye, that she does," said Miss Polly; "and she's danced with him too."

Oh, how I repented my foolish mismanagement! The men bit their lips, and looked at one another in some confusion. This was perceived by our party, who, taking advantage of it, protested they would write Lord Orville word of their ill behaviour without delay. This quite startled them, and one of the footmen offered to run to the palace and ask his Lord's permission for our having the carriage.

This proposal really made me tremble; and the Branghtons all hung back upon it: but Madame Duval is never to be dissuaded from a scheme she has once formed. "Do so," cried she, "and give this child's compliments to your master, and tell him, as we ha'n't no coach here, we should be glad to go just as far as Holborn in his."

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"No, no, no!" cried I; "don't go,—I know nothing of his Lordship,—I send no message,—I have nothing to say to him!"

The men, very much perplexed, could with difficulty restrain themselves from resuming their impertinent mirth. Madame Duval scolded me very angrily, and then desired them to go directly.

"Pray, then," said the coachman, "what name is to be given to my Lord?"

"Anville," answered Madame Duval, "tell him Miss Anville wants the coach; the young lady he danced with once."

I was really in an agony; but the winds could not have been more deaf to me, than those to whom I pleaded! and therefore the footman, urged by the repeated threats of Madame Duval, and perhaps recollecting the name himself, actually went to the palace with this strange message!

He returned in a few minutes, and bowing to me with the greatest respect, said, "My Lord desires his compliments, and his carriage will be always at Miss Anville's service."

I was so much affected by this politeness, and chagrined at the whole affair, that I could scarce refrain from tears. Madame Duval and the Miss Branghtons eagerly jumped into the coach, and desired me to follow. I would rather have

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submitted to the severest punishment;—but all resistance was vain.

During the whole ride, I said not a word; however, the rest of the party were so talkative, that my silence was very immaterial. We stopped at our lodgings; but when Madame Duval and I alighted, the Branghtons asked if they could not be carried on to Snow-hill? The servants, now all civility, made no objection. Remonstrances from me would, I too well knew, be fruitless; and therefore, with a heavy heart, I retired to my room, and left them to their own direction.

Seldom have I passed a night in greater uneasiness:—so lately to have cleared myself in the good opinion of Lord Orville,—so soon to forfeit it!—to give him reason to suppose I presumed to boast of his acquaintance!—to publish his having danced with me!—to take with *him* a liberty I should have blushed to have taken with the most intimate of my friends!—to treat with such impertinent freedom one who has honored *me* with such distinguished respect!—indeed, Sir, I could have met with no accident that would so cruelly have tormented me!

If such were, then, my feelings,—imagine, for I cannot describe, what I suffered during the scene I am now going to write.

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This morning, while I was alone in the dining-room, young Branghton called. He entered with a most important air, and strutting up to me, said, "Miss, *Lord Orville* sends his compliments to you."

"Lord Orville!"—repeated I, much amazed.

"Yes, Miss, Lord Orville! for I know his Lordship now, as well as you!—and a very civil gentleman he is, for all he's a Lord."

"For heaven's sake!" cried I, "explain yourself."

"Why, you must know, Miss, after we left you, we met with a little misfortune; but I don't mind it now, for it's all turned out for the best: but, just as we were a going up Snow-hill, plump we comes against a cart, with such a jogg it almost pulled the coach-wheel off: however, that i'n't the worst; for as I went to open the door in a hurry, a thinking the coach would be broke down, as ill-luck would have it, I never minded that the glass was up, and so I poked my head fairly through it. Only see, Miss, how I've cut my forehead!"

A much worse accident to himself would not, I believe, at that moment, have given me any concern for him: however, he proceeded with his account, for I was too much confounded to interrupt him.

"Goodness, Miss! we were in such a stew,—

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us, and the servants, and all, as you can't think; for, besides the glass being broke, the coachman said how the coach wouldn't be safe to go back to Kensington. So we didn't know what to do; however, the footmen said they'd go and tell his Lordship what had happened. So, then, father grew quite uneasy like, for fear of his Lordship's taking offence and prejudising us in our business: so he said I should go this morning and ask his pardon, 'cause of having broke the glass. So then I asked the footmen the direction, and they told me he lived in Berkeley-square; so this morning I went,—and I soon found out the house."

"You did!" cried I, quite out of breath with apprehension.

"Yes, Miss! and a very fine house it is. Did you ever see it?"

"No."

"No!—why, then, Miss, I know more of his Lordship than you do, for all you knew him first. So, when I came to the door, I was in a peck of troubles, a thinking what I should say to him; however, the servants had no mind I should see him, for they told me he was busy, but I might leave my message. So I was just a coming away, when I bethought myself to say I come from you."

"From *me*!—"

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"Yes, Miss!—for, you know, why should I have such a long walk as that for nothing? So I says to the porter, says I, tell his Lordship, says I, one wants to speak to him as comes from one Miss Anville, says I."

"Good God!" cried I, "and by what authority did you take such a liberty!"

"Goodness, Miss! don't be in such a hurry, for you'll be as glad as me, when you hear how well it all turned out. So, then, they made way for me, and said his Lordship would see me directly; and there I was led through such a heap of servants, and so many rooms, that my heart quite misgave me; for I thought, thinks I, he'll be so proud he'll hardly let me speak; but he's no more proud than I am, and he was as civil as if I'd been a lord myself. So then I said, I hoped he wouldn't take it amiss about the glass, for it was quite an accident; but he bid me not mention it, for it did not signify: and then he said he hoped you got safe home, and wasn't frightened; and so I said yes, and I gave your duty to him."

"My duty to him!" exclaimed I,—"and who gave you leave?—who desired you?"

"Oh, I did it of my own head, just to make him think I came from you. But I should have told you before how the footman said he was going out of town to-morrow evening, and that

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his sister was soon to be married, and that he was a ordering a heap of things for that; so it come into my head, as he was so affable, that I'd ask him for his custom. So I says, says I, my Lord, says I, if your Lordship i'n't engaged particularly, my father is a silversmith, and he'd be very proud to serve you, says I; and Miss Anville, as danced with you, is his cousin, and she's my cousin too, and she'd be very much obligated to you, I'm sure."

"You'll drive me wild!" cried I, starting from my seat, "you have done me an irreparable injury; — but I will hear no more!" — and then I ran into my own room.

I was half frantic, I really raved; the good opinion of Lord Orville seemed now irretrievably lost: a faint hope, which in the morning I had vainly encouraged, that I might see him again and explain the transaction, wholly vanished, now I found he was so soon to leave town: and I could not but conclude that, for the rest of my life, he would regard me as an object of utter contempt.

The very idea was a dagger to my heart!—I could not support it, and—but I blush to proceed—I fear your disapprobation; yet I should not be conscious of having merited it, but that the repugnance I feel to relate to you what I have done, makes me suspect I must have erred.

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Will you forgive me, if I own that I *first* wrote an account of this transaction to Miss Mirvan? —and that I even thought of *concealing* it from you?—Short-lived, however, was the ungrateful idea, and sooner will I risk the justice of your displeasure, than unworthily betray your generous confidence.

You are now probably prepared for what follows; which is a letter—a hasty letter, that, in the height of my agitation, I wrote to Lord Orville.

"My Lord,

"I am so infinitely ashamed of the application made yesterday for your Lordship's carriage in my name, and so greatly shocked at hearing how much it was injured, that I cannot forbear writing a few lines, to clear myself from the imputation of an impertinence which I blush to be suspected of, and to acquaint you, that the request for your carriage was made against my consent, and the visit with which you were importuned this morning was without my knowledge.

"I am inexpressibly concerned at having been the instrument, however innocently, of so much trouble to your Lordship; but I beg you to believe that reading these lines is the only part of it which I have given voluntarily. I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble servant,

Evelina Anville."

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I applied to the maid of the house to get this note conveyed to Berkeley-square; but scarce had I parted with it, before I regretted having written at all, and I was flying down stairs to recover it, when the voice of Sir Clement Willoughby stopped me. As Madame Duval had ordered we should be denied to him, I was obliged to return up stairs; and after he was gone, my application was too late, as the maid had given it to a porter.

My time did not pass very serenely while he was gone; however, he brought me no answer, but that Lord Orville was not at home. Whether or not he will take the trouble to send any; — or whether he will condescend to call; — or whether the affair will rest as it is, I know not; — but, in being ignorant, am most cruelly anxious.

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LETTER XXIV.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

July 4th.

YOU may now, my dear Sir! send Mrs. Clinton for your Evelina with as much speed as she can conveniently make the journey, for no further opposition will be made to her leaving this town: happy had it perhaps been for her had she never entered it!

This morning Madame Duval desired me to go to Snow-hill, with an invitation to the Branghton's and Mr. Smith, to spend the evening with her: and she desired M. Du Bois, who breakfasted with us, to accompany me. I was very unwilling to obey her, as I neither wished to walk with M. Du Bois, nor yet to meet young Branghton. And, indeed, another, a yet more powerful reason, added to my reluctance,—for I thought it possible that Lord Orville might send some answer, or perhaps might call, during my absence; however, I did not dare dispute her commands.

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Poor M. Du Bois spoke not a word during our walk, which was, I believe, equally unpleasant to us both. We found all the family assembled in the shop. Mr. Smith, the moment he perceived me, addressed himself to Miss Branghton, whom he entertained with all the gallantry in his power. I rejoice to find that my conduct at the Hampstead ball has had so good an effect, But young Branghton was extremely troublesome; he repeatedly laughed in my face, and looked so impertinently significant, that I was obliged to give up my reserve to M. Du Bois, and enter into conversation with him, merely to avoid such boldness.

"Miss," said Mr. Branghton, "I'm sorry to hear from my son that you wasn't pleased with what we did about that Lord Orville;—but I should like to know what it was you found fault with, for we did all for the best."

"Goodness!" cried the son, "why if you'd seen Miss, you'd have been surprised—she went out of the room quite in a huff, like."

"It is too late, now," said I, "to reason upon this subject; but, for the future, I must take the liberty to request that my name may never be made use of without my knowledge. May I tell Madame Duval that you will do her the favor to accept her invitation?"

"As to me, Ma'am," said Mr. Smith, "I am

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much obliged to the old lady, but I've no mind to be taken in by her again; you'll excuse me, Ma'am."

All the rest promised to come, and I then took leave: but as I left the shop, I heard Mr. Branghton say: "Take courage, Tom! she's only coy."

And, before I had walked ten yards, the youth followed.

I was so much offended that I would not look at him, but began to converse with M. Du Bois, who was now more lively than I had ever before seen him; for, most unfortunately, he misinterpreted the reason of my attention to him.

The first intelligence I received when I came home was, that two gentlemen had called and left cards. I eagerly inquired for them, and read the names of Lord Orville and Sir Clement Willoughby. I by no means regretted that I missed seeing the latter, but perhaps I may all my life regret that I missed the former, for probably he has now left town,—and I may see him no more!

"My goodness!" cried young Branghton, rudely looking over me, "only think of that Lord's coming all this way? 'Tis my belief he'd got some order ready for father, and so he'd a mind to call and ask you if I'd told him the truth."

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"Pray, Betty," cried I, "how long has he been gone?"

"Not two minutes, Ma'am."

"Why then I'll lay you any wager," said young Branghton, "he saw you and I a-walking up Holborn Hill!"

"God forbid!" cried I, impatiently; and, too much chagrined to bear with any more of his remarks, I ran up stairs: but I heard him say to M. Du Bois, "Miss is so *huppish* this morning, that I think I had better not speak to her again."

I wish M. Du Bois had taken the same resolution; but he chose to follow me into the dining-room, which he found empty.

"*Vous ne l'aimez donc pas, ce garçon, Mademoiselle!*" cried he.

"Me!" cried I, "no, I detest him!" for I was quite sick at heart.

"*Ah, tu me rends la vie!*" cried he, and flinging himself at my feet, he had just caught my hand, as the door was opened by Madame Duval.

Hastily, and with marks of guilty confusion in his face, he arose; but the rage of that lady quite amazed me! advancing to the retreating M. Du Bois, she began, in French, an attack which her extreme wrath and wonderful volubility almost rendered unintelligible; yet I un-

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derstood but too much, since her reproaches convinced me she had herself proposed being the object of his affection.

He defended himself in a weak and evasive manner; and, upon her commanding him from her sight, very readily withdrew: and then, with yet greater violence, she upbraided me with having *seduced* his heart; called me an ungrateful, designing girl; and protested she would neither take me to Paris, nor any more interest herself in my affairs, unless I would instantly agree to marry young Branghton.

Frightened as I had been at her vehemence, this proposal restored all my courage; and I frankly told her that in this point I never could obey her. More irritated than ever, she ordered me to quit the room.

Such is the present situation of affairs. I shall excuse myself from seeing the Branghtons this afternoon: indeed, I never wish to see them again. I am sorry, however innocently, that I have displeased Madame Duval, yet I shall be very glad to quit this town, for I believe it does not, now, contain one person I ever wish to meet again. Had I but seen Lord Orville, I should regret nothing: I could then have more fully explained what I so hastily wrote; yet it will always be a pleasure to me to recollect that he called, since I flatter myself it was in

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consequence of his being satisfied with my letter.

Adieu, my dear Sir; the time now approaches when I hope once more to receive your blessing, and to owe all my joy, all my happiness, to your kindness.

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LETTER XXV.

MR. VILLARS TO EVELINA.

Berry Hill, July 7.

WELCOME, thrice welcome, my darling Evelina, to the arms of the truest, the fondest of your friends! Mrs. Clinton, who shall hasten to you with these lines, will conduct you directly hither; for I can consent no longer to be parted from the child of my bosom!—the comfort of my age!—the sweet solace of all my infirmities! Your worthy friends at Howard Grove must pardon me that I rob them of the visit you proposed to make them, before your return to Berry Hill; for I find my fortitude unequal to a longer separation.

I have much to say to you, many comments to make upon your late letters, some parts of which give me no little uneasiness; but I will reserve my remarks for our future conversations. Hasten, then, to the spot of thy nativity, the

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abode of thy youth, where never yet care or sorrow had power to annoy thee! — Oh, that they might ever be banished this peaceful dwelling!

Adieu, my dearest Evelina! I pray but that thy satisfaction at our approaching meeting may bear any comparison with mine!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

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LETTER XXVI.

EVELINA TO MISS MIRVAN.

Berry Hill, July 14.

MY sweet Maria will be much surprised, and, I am willing to flatter myself, concerned, when, instead of her friend, she receives this letter—this cold, this inanimate letter, which will but ill express the feelings of the heart which indites it.

When I wrote to you last Friday, I was in hourly expectation of seeing Mrs. Clinton, with whom I intended to have set out for Howard Grove; Mrs. Clinton came, but my plan was necessarily altered, for she brought me a letter,—the sweetest that ever was penned—from the best and kindest friend that ever orphan was blessed with, requiring my immediate attendance at Berry Hill.

I obeyed,—and pardon me if I own I obeyed without reluctance; after so long a separation, should I not else have been the most ungrateful of mortals!—And yet,—oh Maria! though I

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wished to leave London, the gratification of my wish afforded me no happiness! and though I felt an impatience inexpressible to return hither, no words, no language can explain the heaviness of heart with which I made the journey. I believe you would hardly have known me;—indeed, I hardly know myself. Perhaps had I first seen *you*, in your kind and sympathising bosom I might have ventured to have reposed every secret of my soul; and then—but let me pursue my journal.

Mrs. Clinton delivered Madame Duval a letter from Mr. Villars, which requested her leave for my return, and, indeed, it was very readily accorded: yet, when she found, by my willingness to quit town, that M. Du Bois was really indifferent to me, she somewhat softened in my favor, and declared that, but for punishing his folly in thinking of such a child, she would not have consented to my being again buried in the country.

All the Branghtons called to take leave of me: but I will not write a word more about them; indeed I cannot with any patience think of that family, to whose forwardness and impertinence is owing all the uneasiness I at this moment suffer!

So great was the depression of my spirits upon the road, that it was with difficulty I could per-

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suade the worthy Mrs. Clinton I was not ill: but alas, the situation of my mind was such as would have rendered any mere bodily pain, by comparison, even enviable!

And yet, when we arrived at Berry Hill,—when the chaise stopped at this place,—how did my heart throb with joy! And when, through the window, I beheld the dearest, the most venerable of men, with uplifted hands, returning, as I doubt not, thanks for my safe arrival,—good God! I thought it would have burst my bosom!—I opened the chaise-door myself, I flew,—for my feet did not seem to touch the ground,—into the parlour; he had risen to meet me, but the moment I appeared, he sunk into his chair, uttering with a deep sigh, though his face *beamed* with delight, "My God, I thank thee!"

I sprung forward, and, with a pleasure that bordered upon agony, I embraced his knees, I kissed his hands, I wept over them, but could not speak: while he, now raising his eyes in thankfulness towards heaven, now bowing down his reverend head and folding me in his arms, could scarce articulate the blessings with which his kind and benevolent heart overflowed.

O Miss Mirvan! to be so beloved by the best of men,—should I not be happy?—Should I have one wish, save that of meriting his goodness?—

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Yet think me not ungrateful; indeed, I am not, although the internal sadness of my mind unfits me, at present, for enjoying as I ought the bounties of Providence.

I cannot journalise—cannot arrange my ideas into order.

How little has situation to do with happiness! I had flattered myself that, when restored to Berry Hill, I should be restored to tranquillity: far otherwise have I found it, for never yet had tranquillity and Evelina so little intercourse.

I blush for what I have written. Can you, Maria, forgive my gravity? but I restrain it so much and so painfully in the presence of Mr. Villars, that I know not how to deny myself the consolation of indulging it to you.

Adieu, my dear Miss Mirvan.

Yet one thing I must add; do not let the seriousness of this letter deceive you; do not impute to a wrong cause the melancholy I confess, by supposing that the heart of your friend mourns a too great susceptibility; no, indeed! believe me, it never was—never can be, more assuredly her own than at this moment. So witness in all truth, your affectionate

EVELINA.

You will make my excuses to the honored Lady Howard, and to your dear mother.

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LETTER XXVII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Berry-Hill, July 21.

YOU accuse me of mystery, and charge me with reserve: I cannot doubt but I must have merited the accusation;—yet, to clear myself,—you know not how painful will be the task. But I cannot resist your kind intreaties,—indeed, I do not wish to resist them, for your friendship and affection will soothe my chagrin. Had it arisen from any other cause, not a moment would I have deferred the communication you ask;—but, as it is, I would, were it possible, not only conceal it from all the world, but endeavour to disbelieve it myself. Yet, since I *must* tell you, why trifle with your impatience?

I know not how to come to the point; twenty times have I attempted it in vain;—but I will *force* myself to proceed.

Oh, Miss Mirvan! could you ever have believed, that one—who seemed formed as a pattern for his fellow-creatures, as a model of perfection,—

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one whose elegance surpassed all description,—whose sweetness of manners disgraced all comparison,—oh, Miss Mirvan! could you ever have believed that *Lord Orville* would have treated me with indignity?

Never, never again will I trust to appearances,—never confide in my own weak judgment,—never believe that person to be good who seems to be amiable! What cruel maxims are we taught by a knowledge of the world!—But while my own reflections absorb me, I forget you are still in suspense.

I had just finished the last letter which I wrote to you from London, when the maid of the house brought me a note. It was given to her, she said, by a footman, who told her he would call the next day for an answer.

This note,—but let it speak for itself.

"TO MISS ANVILLE.

"WITH transport, most charming of thy sex! did I read the letter with which you yesterday morning favored me. I am sorry the affair of the carriage should have given you any concern, but I am highly flattered by the anxiety you express so kindly. Believe me, my lovely

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girl, I am truly sensible of the honor of your good opinion, and feel myself deeply penetrated with love and gratitude. The correspondence you have so sweetly commenced I shall be proud of continuing, and I hope the strong sense I have of the favor you do me, will prevent your withdrawing it. Assure yourself that I desire nothing more ardently, than to pour forth my thanks at your feet, and to offer those vows which are so justly the tribute of your charms and accomplishments. In your next, I intreat you to acquaint me how long you shall remain in town. The servant whom I shall commission to call for an answer, has orders to ride post with it to me. My impatience for his arrival will be very great, though inferior to that with which I burn to tell you, in person, how much I am, my sweet girl,

Your grateful admirer,

ORVILLE."

What a letter!—how has my proud heart swelled, every line I have copied! What I wrote to him you know; tell me then, my dear friend, do you think it merited such an answer?—and that I have deservedly incurred the liberty he has taken? I meant nothing but a simple apology,

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which I thought as much due to my own character as to his; yet, by the construction he seems to have put upon it, should you not have imagined it contained the avowal of sentiments which might, indeed, have provoked his contempt?

The moment the letter was delivered to me, I retired to my own room to read it, and so eager was my first perusal, that,—I am ashamed to own—it gave me no sensation but of delight.—Unsuspicious of any impropriety from Lord Orville, I perceived not immediately the impertinence it implied.—I only marked the expressions of his own regard; and I was so much surprised, that I was unable, for some time, to compose myself, or read it again,—I could only walk up and down the room, repeating to myself, "Good God! is it possible?—am I, then, loved by Lord Orville?"

But this dream was soon over, and I awoke to far different feelings; upon a second reading, I thought every word changed,—it did not seem the same letter,—I could not find one sentence that I could look at without blushing: my astonishment was extreme, and it was succeeded by the utmost indignation.

If, as I am very ready to acknowledge, I erred in writing to Lord Orville, was it for *him* to punish the error? if he was offended, could he

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not have been silent? If he thought my letter ill-judged, should he not have pitied my ignorance, have considered my youth, and allowed for my inexperience?

Oh, Maria! how have I been deceived in this man! Words have no power to tell the high opinion I had of him; to that was owing the unfortunate solicitude which prompted my writing, —a solicitude I must for ever repent!

Yet, perhaps, I have rather reason to rejoice than to grieve; since this affair has shown me his real disposition, and removed that partiality, which, covering his every imperfection, left only his virtues and good qualities exposed to view. Had the deception continued much longer, had my mind received any additional prejudice in his favor, who knows whither my mistaken ideas might have led me? indeed, I fear I was in greater danger than I apprehended, or can now think of without trembling,—for oh, if this weak heart of mine had been penetrated with too deep an impression of his merit,—my peace and happiness had been lost for ever!

I would fain encourage more cheerful thoughts, fain drive from my mind the melancholy that has taken possession of it,—but I cannot succeed; for, added to the humiliating feelings which so powerfully oppress me, I have yet another cause

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of concern; —alas, my dear Maria, I have broken the tranquillity of the best of men!

I have never had the courage to show him this cruel letter: I could not bear so greatly to depreciate in his opinion, one whom I had, with infinite anxiety, raised in it myself. Indeed, my first determination was to confine my chagrin totally to my own bosom; but your friendly inquiries have drawn it from me; and now I wish I had made no concealment from the beginning, since I know not how to account for a gravity which not all my endeavours can entirely hide or repress.

My greatest apprehension is, lest he should imagine that my residence in London has given me a distaste to the country. Everybody I see takes notice of my being altered, and looking pale and ill. I should be very indifferent to all such observations, did I not perceive that they draw upon me the eyes of Mr. Villars, which glisten with affectionate concern.

This morning, in speaking of my London expedition, he mentioned Lord Orville. I felt so much disturbed, that I would instantly have changed the subject; but he would not allow me, and, very unexpectedly, he began his panegyric, extolling, in strong terms, his manly and honorable behaviour in regard to the Marybone adventure. My cheeks glowed with in-

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dignation every word he spoke;—so lately as I had myself fancied him the noblest of his sex, now that I was so well convinced of my mistake, I could not bear to hear his undeserved praises uttered by one so really good, so unsuspecting, so pure of heart!

What he thought of my silence and uneasiness, I fear to know, but I hope he will mention the subject no more. I will not, however, with ungrateful indolence, give way to a sadness which I find infectious to him who merits the most cheerful exertion of my spirits. I am thankful that he has forborne to probe my wound, and I will endeavour to heal it by the consciousness that I have not deserved the indignity I have received. Yet I cannot but lament to find myself in a world so deceitful, where we must suspect what we see, distrust what we hear, and doubt even what we feel!

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LETTER XXVIII.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Berry Hill, July 29.

I MUST own myself somewhat distressed how to answer your raillery: yet believe me, my dear Maria, your suggestions are those of *fancy* not of *truth*. I am unconscious of the weakness you suspect; yet, to dispel your doubts, I will animate myself more than ever to conquer my chagrin and to recover my spirits.

You wonder, you say, since my *heart* takes no part in this affair, why it should make me so unhappy? And can you—acquainted as you are with the high opinion I entertained of Lord Orville—can you wonder that so great a disappointment in his character should affect me? indeed, had so strange a letter been sent to me from *any* body, it could not have failed shocking me; how much more sensibly, then, must I feel such an affront, when received from the man in the world I had imagined least capable of giving it?

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You are glad I made no reply; assure yourself, my dear friend, had this letter been the most respectful that could be written, the clandestine air given to it, by his proposal of sending his servant for my answer, instead of having it directed to his house, would effectually have prevented my writing. Indeed, I have an aversion the most sincere to all mysteries, all private actions; however foolishly and blameably, in regard to this letter, I have deviated from the open path which, from earliest infancy, I was taught to tread.

He talks of my having *commenced a correspondence* with him: and could Lord Orville, indeed, believe I had such a design?—believe me so forward, so bold, so strangely ridiculous? I know not if his man called or not, but I rejoice that I quitted London before he came, and without leaving any message for him. What, indeed, could I have said? it would have been a condescension very unmerited to have taken any, the least notice of such a letter.

Never shall I cease to wonder how he could write it. Oh, Maria! what, what could induce him so causelessly to wound and affront one, who would sooner have died than wilfully offended *him*?—How mortifying a freedom of style! how cruel an implication conveyed by his *thanks* and expressions of gratitude! Is it not

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astonishing, that any man can *appear* so modest, who is so vain.

Every hour I regret the secrecy I have observed with my beloved Mr. Villars; I know not what bewitched me, but I felt, at first, a repugnance to publishing this affair that I could not surmount,—and now, I am ashamed of confessing that I have any thing to confess! Yet I deserve to be punished for the false delicacy which occasioned my silence; since, if Lord Orville himself was contented to forfeit his character, was it for me, almost at the expense of my own, to support it?

Yet I believe I should be very easy, now the first shock is over, and now that I see the whole affair with the resentment it merits, did not all my good friends in this neighbourhood, who think me extremely altered, tease me about my gravity, and torment Mr. Villars with observations upon my dejection and falling away. The subject is no sooner started, than a deep gloom overspreads his venerable countenance, and he looks at me with a tenderness so melancholy, that I know not how to endure the consciousness of exciting it.

Mrs. Selwyn, a lady of large fortune, who lives about three miles from Berry Hill, and who has always honored me with very distinguishing marks of regard, is going, in a short time, to

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Bristol, and has proposed to Mr. Villars to take me with her, for the recovery of my health. He seemed very much distressed whether to consent or refuse; but I, without any hesitation, warmly opposed the scheme, protesting my health could no where be better than in this pure air. He had the goodness to thank me for this readiness to stay with him: but he is all goodness! Oh, that it were in my power to be, indeed, what in the kindness of his heart he has called me, —the comfort of his age, and solace of his infirmities!

Never do I wish to be again separated from him. If here I am grave, elsewhere I should be unhappy. In his presence, with a very little exertion, all the cheerfulness of my disposition seems ready to return; the benevolence of his countenance reanimates, the harmony of his temper composes, the purity of his character edifies me! I owe to him every thing; and, far from finding my debt of gratitude a weight, the first pride, first pleasure of my life is the recollection of the obligations conferred upon me by a goodness so unequalled.

Once, indeed, I thought there existed another, — who, when *time had wintered o'er his locks*, would have shone forth among his fellow-creatures, with the same brightness of worth which dignifies my honored Mr. Villars;—a brightness, how superior in value to that which results from

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mere quickness of parts, wit, or imagination!—a brightness, which, not contented with merely diffusing smiles and gaining admiration from the sallies of the spirits, reflects a real and a glorious lustre upon all mankind! Oh, how great was my error!—how ill did I judge!—how cruelly have I been deceived!

I will not go to Bristol, though Mrs. Selwyn is very urgent with me;—but I desire not to see any more of the world; the few months I have already passed in it have sufficed to give me a disgust even to its name.

I hope, too, I shall see Lord Orville no more; accustomed, from my first knowledge of him, to regard him, as a *being superior to his race*, his presence, perhaps, might banish my resentment, and I might forget his illconduct,—for oh, Maria! —I should not know how to see *Lord Orville*—and to think of displeasure!

As a sister, I loved him,—I could have entrusted him with every thought of my heart, had he deigned to wish my confidence; so steady did I think his honor, so *feminine* his delicacy, and so amiable his nature! I have a thousand times imagined that the whole study of his life, and whole purport of his reflections, tended solely to the good and happiness of others:—but I will talk, —write,—think of him no more!

Adieu, my dear friend!

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LETTER XXIX.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Berry Hill, August 10.

YOU complain of my silence, my dear Miss Mirvan,—but what have I to write? Narrative does not offer, nor does a lively imagination supply the deficiency. I have, however, at present, sufficient matter for a letter, in relating a conversation I had yesterday with Mr. Villars.

Our breakfast had been the most cheerful we have had since my return hither; and, when it was over, he did not, as usual, retire to his study, but continued to converse with me while I worked. We might, probably, have passed all the morning thus sociably, but for the entrance of a farmer, who came to solicit advice concerning some domestic affairs. They withdrew together into the study.

The moment I was alone, my spirits failed me; the exertion with which I had supported them, had fatigued my mind; I flung away my work,

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and leaning my arms on the table, gave way to a train of disagreeable reflections, which, bursting from the restraint that had smothered them, filled me with unusual sadness.

This was my situation, when, looking towards the door, which was open, I perceived Mr. Villars, who was earnestly regarding me. "Is Farmer Smith gone, Sir?" cried I, hastily rising, and snatching up my work.

"Don't let me disturb you," said he, gravely; "I will go again to my study."

"Will you, Sir? — I was in hopes you were coming to sit here."

"In hopes! — and why, Evelina, should you hope it?"

This question was so unexpected, that I knew not how to answer it; but, as I saw he was moving away, I followed, and begged him to return.

"No, my dear, no!" said he, with a forced smile, "I only interrupt your meditations."

Again I knew not what to say; and while I hesitated, he retired. My heart was with him, but I had not the courage to follow. The idea of an explanation, brought on in so serious a manner, frightened me. I recollected the inference *you* had drawn from my uneasiness, and I feared that he might make a similar interpretation.

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Solitary and thoughtful, I passed the rest of the morning in my own room. At dinner, I again attempted to be cheerful; but Mr. Villars himself was grave, and I had not sufficient spirits to support a conversation merely by my own efforts.

As soon as dinner was over he took a book, and I walked to the window. I believe I remained near an hour in this situation. All my thoughts were directed to considering how I might dispel the doubts which I apprehended Mr. Villars had formed, without acknowledging a circumstance which I had suffered so much pain merely to conceal. But, while I was thus planning for the future, I forgot the present; and so intent was I upon the subject which occupied me, that the strange appearance of my unusual inactivity and extreme thoughtfulness never occurred to me. But when, at last, I recollected myself and turned round, I saw that Mr. Villars, who had parted with his book, was wholly engrossed in attending to me. I started from my reverie, and, hardly knowing what I said, asked if he had been reading?

He paused a moment, and then replied, "Yes, my child;—a book that both afflicts and perplexes me!"

He means *me*, thought I; and therefore I made no answer.

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"What if we read it together?" continued he, "will you assist me to clear its obscurity?"

I knew not what to say, but I sighed, involuntarily, from the bottom of my heart. He rose, and, approaching me, said, with emotion, "My child, I can no longer be a silent witness of thy sorrow,—is not *thy* sorrow *my* sorrow? —and ought I to be a stranger to the cause, when I so deeply sympathise in the effect?"

"Cause, Sir!" cried I, greatly alarmed, "what cause?—I don't know,—I can't tell—I—"

"Fear not," said he, kindly, "to unbosom thyself to me, my dearest Evelina! open to me thy whole heart,—it can have no feelings for which I will not make allowance. Tell me, therefore, what it is that thus afflicts us both; and who knows but I may suggest some means of relief?"

"You are too, too good," cried I, greatly embarrassed; "but indeed I know not what you mean."

"I see," said he, "it is painful to you to speak: suppose, then, I endeavour to save you by guessing?"

"Impossible! impossible!" cried I, eagerly, "no one living could ever guess, ever suppose—" I stopped abruptly; for I then recollected I was acknowledging something *was* to be guessed: however, he noticed not my mistake.

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"At least, let me try," answered he, mildly; "perhaps I may be a better diviner than you imagine: if I guess every thing that is probable, surely I must approach near the real reason. Be honest, then, my love! and speak without reserve,—does not the country, after so much gaiety, so much variety, does it not appear insipid and tiresome?"

"No, indeed! I love it more than ever; and more than ever do I wish I had never, never quitted it!"

"Oh, my child! that I had not permitted the journey! My judgment always opposed it, but my resolution was not proof against persuasion."

"I blush, indeed," cried I, "to recollect my earnestness; — but I have been my own punisher!"

"It is too late, now," answered he, "to reflect upon this subject; let us endeavour to avoid repentance for the time to come, and we shall not have erred without reaping some instruction." Then seating himself, and making me sit by him, he continued: "I must now guess again; perhaps you regret the loss of those friends you knew in town,—perhaps you miss their society, and fear you may see them no more,— perhaps Lord Orville—"

I could not keep my seat, but rising hastily, said, "Dear Sir, ask me nothing more!—for

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I have nothing to own,—nothing to say;—my gravity has been merely accidental, and I can give no reason for it at all. Shall I fetch you another book?—or will you have this again?"

For some minutes he was totally silent, and I pretended to employ myself in looking for a book: at last, with a deep sigh, "I see," said he, "I see but too plainly, that though Evelina is returned,—I have lost my child!"

"No, Sir, no!" cried I, inexpressibly shocked, "she is more your's than ever! Without you, the world would be a desert to her, and life a burthen;—forgive her, then, and,—if you can,—condescend to be, once more, the confident of all her thoughts."

"How highly I value, how greatly I wish for her confidence," returned he, "she cannot but know;—yet to extort, to tear it from her,—my justice, my affection, both revolt at the idea. I am sorry that I was so earnest with you;—leave me, my dear! leave me, and compose yourself;—we will meet again at tea."

"Do you then refuse to hear me?"

"No, but I abhor to compel you. I have long seen that your mind has been ill at ease, and mine has largely partaken of your concern: I forbore to question you, for I hoped that time, and absence from whatever excited your uneasiness, might best operate in silence: but, alas!

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your affliction seems only to augment,—your health declines,—your look alters;—oh, Evelina! my aged heart bleeds to see the change!—bleeds to behold the darling it had cherished, the prop it had reared for its support when bowed down by years and infirmities, sinking itself under the pressure of internal grief!—struggling to hide what it should seek to participate!—But go, my dear! go to your own room,—we both want composure, and we will talk of this matter some other time."

"Oh, Sir!" cried I, penetrated to the soul, "bid me not leave you!—think me not so lost to feeling, to gratitude—"

"Not a word of that," interrupted he; "it pains me you should think upon that subject,—pains me you should ever remember that you have not a natural, an hereditary right to every thing within my power. I meant not to affect you thus,—I hoped to have soothed you!—but my anxiety betrayed me to an urgency that has distressed you. Comfort yourself, my love! and doubt not but that time will stand your friend, and all will end well."

I burst into tears: with difficulty had I so long restrained them; for my heart, while it glowed with tenderness and gratitude, was oppressed with a sense of its own unworthiness. "You are all, all goodness!" cried I, in a voice scarce

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audible, "little as I deserve,—unable as I am to repay such kindness,—yet my whole soul feels—thanks you for it!"

"My dearest child," cried he, "I cannot bear to see thy tears;—for *my* sake dry them,—such a sight is too much for me: think of that, Evelina, and take comfort, I charge thee!"

"Say, then!" cried I, kneeling at his feet, "say, then, that you forgive me!—that you pardon my reserve,—that you will again suffer me to tell you my most secret thoughts, and rely upon my promise never more to forfeit your confidence!—my father! my protector!—my ever-honored, ever-loved—my best and only friend!—say you forgive your Evelina, and she will study better to deserve your goodness!"

He raised, he embraced me; he called me his sole joy, his only earthly hope, and the child of his bosom! He folded me to his heart, and, while I wept from the fulness of mine, with words of sweetest kindness and consolation, he soothed and tranquilised me.

Dear to my remembrance will ever be that moment, when, banishing the reserve I had so foolishly planned and so painfully supported, I was restored to the confidence of the best of men!

When, at length, we were again quietly and composedly seated by each other, and Mr. Villars

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waited for the explanation I had begged him to hear, I found myself extremely embarrassed how to introduce the subject which must lead to it. He saw my distress, and, with a kind of benevolent pleasantry, asked me if I would let him *guess* any more? I assented in silence.

"Shall I, then, go back to where I left off?"

"If—if you please;—I believe so,—" said I, stammering.

"Well, then, my love! I think I was speaking of the regret it was natural you should feel upon quitting those from whom you had received civility and kindness, with so little certainty of ever seeing them again, or being able to return their good offices? These are circumstances that afford but melancholy reflections to young minds; and the affectionate disposition of my Evelina, open to all social feelings, must be hurt more than usual by such considerations.—You are silent, my dear? — Shall I name those whom I think most worthy the regret I speak of?—we shall then see if our opinions coincide."

Still I said nothing, and he continued—

"In your London journal, nobody appears in a more amiable, a more respectable light, than Lord Orville; and perhaps——"

"I knew what you would say," cried I, hastily, "and I have long feared where your suspicions would fall; but indeed, Sir, you are mistaken:

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I hate Lord Orville,—he is the last man in the world in whose favor I should be prejudiced."

I stopped; for Mr. Villars looked at me with such infinite surprise that my own warmth made me blush. "You *hate* Lord Orville!" repeated he.

I could make no answer, but took from my pocket-book the letter, and, giving it to him, "See, Sir," said I, "how differently the same man can *talk* and *write*!"

He read it three times before he spoke; and then said, "I am so much astonished, that I know not what I read. When had you this letter?"

I told him. Again he read it; and, after considering its contents some time, said, "I can form but one conjecture concerning this most extraordinary performance: he must certainly have been intoxicated when he wrote it."

"Lord Orville intoxicated!" repeated I; "once I thought him a stranger to all intemperance!—but it is very possible, for I can believe any thing now."

"That a man who had behaved with so strict a regard to delicacy," continued Mr. Villars, "and who, as far as occasion had allowed, manifested sentiments the most honorable, should thus insolently, thus wantonly, insult a modest

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young woman, in his perfect senses, I cannot think possible. But, my dear, you should have inclosed this letter in an empty cover, and have returned it to him again: such a resentment would at once have become *your* character, and have given him an opportunity, in some measure, of clearing his own. He could not well have read this letter the next morning, without being sensible of the impropriety of having written it."

Oh Maria! why had not I this thought?—I might then have received some apology; the mortification would then have been *his*, not *mine*. It is true, he could not have reinstated himself so highly in my opinion as I had once ignorantly placed him; since the conviction of such intemperance would have levelled him with the rest of his imperfect race; yet, my humbled pride might have been consoled by his acknowledgments.

But why should I allow myself to be humbled by a man who can suffer his reason to be thus abjectly debased, when I am exalted by one who knows no vice, and scarcely a failing,—but by hearsay? To think of his kindness, and reflect upon his praises, might animate and comfort me even in the midst of affliction. "Your indignation," said he, "is the result of virtue; you fancied Lord Orville was without fault—he had the appearance of infinite wor-

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thiness, and you supposed his character accorded with his appearance: guileless yourself, how could you prepare against the duplicity of another? Your disappointment has but been proportioned to your expectations, and you have chiefly owed its severity to the innocence which hid its approach."

I will bid these words dwell ever in my memory, and they shall cheer, comfort, and enliven me! This conversation, though extremely affecting to me at the time it passed, has relieved my mind from much anxiety. Concealment, my dear Maria, is the foe of tranquillity: however I may err in future, I will never be disingenuous in acknowledging my errors. To you, and to Mr. Villars, I vow an unremitting confidence.

And yet, though I am more at ease, I am far from well: I have been some time writing this letter; but I hope I shall send you, soon, a more cheerful one.

Adieu, my sweet friend.—I intreat you not to acquaint even your dear mother with this affair; Lord Orville is a favorite with her; and why should I publish that he deserves not that honor?

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LETTER XXX.

EVELINA IN CONTINUATION.

Bristol Hotwells, August 28.

YOU will be again surprised, my dear Maria, at seeing whence I date my letter; but I have been very ill, and Mr. Villars was so much alarmed, that he not only insisted upon my accompanying Mrs. Selwyn hither, but earnestly desired she would hasten her intended journey.

We travelled very slowly, and I did not find myself so much fatigued as I expected. We are situated upon a most delightful spot; the prospect is beautiful, the air pure, and the weather very favorable to invalids. I am already better, and I doubt not but I shall soon be well; as well, in regard to mere health, as I wish to be.

I cannot express the reluctance with which I parted from my revered Mr. Villars: it was not like that parting, which last April preceded my journey to Howard Grove, when, all expectation and hope, though I wept, I rejoiced; and though I sincerely grieved to leave him, I yet wished

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to be gone: the sorrow I now felt was unmixed with any livelier sensation; expectation was vanished, and hope I had none!—all that I held most dear upon earth I quitted, and that upon an errand to the success of which I was totally indifferent,—the reestablishment of my health. Had it been to have seen my sweet Maria, or her dear mother, I should not have repined.

Mrs. Selwyn is very kind and attentive to me. She is extremely clever; her understanding, indeed, may be called *masculine*; but, unfortunately, her manners deserve the same epithet; for, in studying to acquire the knowledge of the other sex, she has lost all the softness of her own. In regard to myself, however, as I have neither courage nor inclination to argue with her, I have never been personally hurt at her want of gentleness;—a virtue, which, nevertheless, seems so essential a part of the female character, that I find myself more awkward and less at ease with a woman who wants it, than I do with a man. She is not a favorite with Mr. Villars, who has often been disgusted at her unmerciful propensity to satire: but his anxiety that I should try the effect of the Bristol waters, overcame his dislike of committing me to her care. Mrs. Clinton is also here; so that I shall be as well attended as his utmost partiality could desire.

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I will continue to write to you, my dear Miss Mirvan, with as much constancy as if I had no other correspondent; though, during my absence from Berry Hill, my letters may, perhaps, be shortened, on account of the minuteness of the journal which I must write to my beloved Mr. Villars: but you, who know his expectations, and how many ties bind me to fulfil them, will, I am sure, rather excuse any omission to yourself, than any negligence to him.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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